

the Dove
with the
Scarlet
Collar



Introduction and Epilogue by
JOSÉ L. MORALES



THE DOVE WITH THE SCARLET COLLAR

Life of

MOTHER MARY ELIAS

of the Blessed Sacrament, O.C.D.

by

MOTHER TERESA OF JESUS, O.C.D.

with

Introduction and Epilogue

by

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Discalced Carmelite
1879-1943*



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INTRODUCTION

God is always calling to sanctity and holiness of life, for this is His character and to go against His Own Image is to go against His essence. At every instant He urges the soul: "Be holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16), "Awake to holiness and sin not" (1 Cor. 15:34). God never tires. His desire is for the elevation of our soul to Him and the development of our spiritual organism unto the perfection to which we are called. "Let your conversation be as it becomes the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27), "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14).

It would be impossible for a soul to live near God without receiving the divine testimony of His Presence, and this Presence is the needed supply for sanctity in the cloister and in the Christian's life wherever he may be. The Lord places at our disposal the full strength and life which is His in the work and operations of His Holy Spirit, dwelling in our hearts. This is the only way we become one in His Oneness. And thus we become possessors of "glory and honour and immortality" (Rom. 2:7) hereafter. And even in our first steps towards Him, our strength is felt as coming directly from Him. For He who would lead us into holiness must "guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79); must show us how we "being delivered out of the hands of our enemies might serve Him, all the days of our life" (Luke 1:74-75).

To be holy is to live in peace with God. For He Himself becomes our peace (1 Thess. 5:23). It is quite different to have peace in our conscience and to have in our heart "the peace of God" (Rom. 16:20).

Our Lord made this distinction when He called it "my peace", (John 14:27) "my joy" (John 15-11) for it is a fruit of His Spirit, and not only a moral fruit of our good actions. This peace is the testimony of God that we are His chosen children and we are looking towards His arms in our pilgrimage to His Heart. Therefore the assurance of His Presence; therefore the assurance of His joy: "the God of love and peace shall be with you" (2 Cor. 13:11).

The Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, came to construct

and dwell in the Temple of God. At the moment this building was first constructed, it seems to have had only one hundred and twenty stones. It was small, when measured by man's standards. Yet, when the Holy Spirit of God came into the world and moved into the Temple, transforming it by His Presence, it became the place of divine manifestation. Just as the Shekinah glory of God transformed the Tabernacle and the Temple when they were dedicated to Him, so, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came into the Christians who had been united by the Spirit with Christ to possess that building as His edifice and to dwell there. Such is the Holy Spirit by whom the Christian is sanctified (2 Thess. 2:13), "The Eternal Spirit, by whom Christ offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9:14). Such is the Holy Spirit by whom we are "sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30); "the Spirit who makes us His habitation" (Eph. 2:22), Who dwells in us (2 Tim. 1:14) by whom we are kept looking to and looking for Christ; by whom we are made to "abound in hope" (Rom. 15:13).

"Christ in us" (Col. 1:27) is one side of our sanctification; "we in Christ" is the other side (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:28). All our sanctification is the result of the Holy Spirit who lives in us (Rom. 8:9).

The life of Reverend Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament, Discalced Carmelite, is a life of God's indwelling Spirit, for it was a life of full surrender to Christ. And this surrender did not come to her like a wild demand from a frightening God, but, on the contrary, it was the result of her commitment to Him, the real love-relationship between her soul and Him. For this reason her love for God became the source of her trust in Him. God is not a friend who makes impossible demands. How could we trust Him in such conditions? Jesus calls us today, as He called Mother Mary Elias, only if we are willing to follow Him with unqualified obedience. If we think for a moment, His invitation demands a whole-hearted allegiance to God. The soul soon learns that such a call, from such a God, by His very character, cannot be satisfied with qualified response, conditional obedience or relative sanctity.

When Mother Mary Elias heard God's voice calling her to Carmel, with the call: "Follow Me in Carmel" came the strength to leave the nets aside and follow Him. There was nothing of

mediocrity in her following of Christ. Following Christ was to be a whole-hearted decision and all other matters took the second place.

In the Sermon of the Mount, there is more than a lot of good ethical advice or encouragement to moral behaviour. It contains definite commands about whole-hearted obedience. Mother Mary Elias understood from the very beginning of her dedicated life the words of St. Luke's gospel (6:46) "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not what I tell you?" It is a real challenge to a sincere soul, seeking God's Will. And it involves the implication of being one of Christ's own and that means obedience in its total surrender. Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament did what the poor widow of Luke 21:2 did by dropping her last two coins in the temple's treasury for the service of God. She could also be identified with another woman of the Gospel, Mary the sister of Martha (Mt. 26:7, John 12:3) who broke open the alabaster box full of precious ointment and anointed the feet of Christ. The Lord said about her: "She has done a beautiful thing." The fragrance of her surrender Mother Mary Elias has spread all over her personal life. The biographical details of this account are still perfumed by those who witnessed her "giving all she had"; and as long as she is remembered on earth, the fragrance of her Carmelite life will "fill the house".

The pages which follow this Introduction were written by Reverend Mother Teresa of Jesus, Foundress of the Carmelite Monastery of the Holy Spirit, in Littleton, Colorado, who is the Prioress at the present and who knew intimately well the inner and exterior life of Reverend Mother Mary Elias. It is from her that I have become aware of the fragrance "that filled the whole house" of Mother Mary Elias' life, and it is of this fragrance I am speaking on these preliminary pages.

In the first Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (2:12) we are told that "we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." This is perhaps one of God's secrets revealed to Mother Mary Elias from the very beginning of her interior life. She possessed this knowledge and she expressed it in human experiences as the light of God became more and more powerful in her soul. This was nothing extra-

ordinary in her life. For Jesus had promised us this knowledge when He said: "If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Mother Mary Elias did not misunderstand the promise made by Jesus: she was to believe and trust Him always—and in return this divine promise would be the acquisition of the truth which frees the soul. Her interior life began by "continuing in Jesus' word" and never doubting *His* Truth. How well she knew that the time would come when every grace received was needed for the days of crisis. "We have received so that we might know here and now," but one experience of God's grace bounces into another and into another. Mother Mary Elias did have an intuition of the consequences of each grace, and although she knew of the wilderness of the journey, with all its sorrows and frustrations, she knew how in one second, the glory of God would let her see what "eye has not seen nor ear heard." In her Carmelite heart she knew that God always keeps His promises. Mother Mary Elias knew how to wait and she discovered how all "the things God has prepared for those who love Him" were now hers. And this faith in God became her strength and vast potential of blessings unknown to the heart of man, for they are only revealed by the Spirit, and "we have received the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

Mother Mary Elias faced situations and problems to which she had no answer. But she knew that every trial and suffering was equipped to glorify God in the midst of tragedy. As a result her heart rejoiced in the peace of God. When the hour of deep sorrow came to her heart and she felt the barrenness and emptiness of God's visitation to pure souls, she stretched out her arms to God as a gesture of her entire gift of herself to Him. She had received God's insight to know, and this knowledge was not a matter of speculation, or trial and error, but a definite positive act of knowing through His Gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge. In the years filled with uncertainty when bewildered by doubt, she could repeat quietly in her heart the transcendental of St. Paul, writing to Timothy (II Tim. 1:12) "I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed." And this undying faith, this "I believe" remained all her life, like a seal on her arm, on her heart and lips.

This glorious confidence is the birthright of every true Carmelite. This confidence is knowing what Psalm 23 says and implies. And Mother Mary Elias did understand it: "although I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Mother Mary Elias did not avoid the tribulations coming upon her. There was no circling around the valley of the shadow of death, there was no evasion of the testing; but there was this glorious confidence "I will fear no evil." Because she "had received . . . what she knew." And the indwelling Spirit of God gave her this victorious spirit—and allowed her to live a deeper life. Mother Mary Elias might have recited the verse: "I know what I have believed"; but she, relying on a person, would in fact have said: "I know *whom* I have believed," and He was there to sustain her soul when the shadows of dark hours surrounded her soul. Mother Mary Elias' faith rested upon God's testimony to Christ's surety of obedience by which we had become one with Him; and this was the inner spring from which her obedience to Christ in Carmel received its proper impulse and joy. She understood her vocation to Carmel as an act of obedience to God's call but this call was a privilege, the privilege of obeying God, of imitating Christ, Whose entire life was one great law-fulfilling, of doing the Will of God. And what is this law but the revealed Will of God? Mother Mary Elias rejected always the word "duty" and preferred that of "privilege". Privilege is not something distinct from duty, nor at variance with duty, but it is duty and something more—it is duty influenced by higher motives, duty uncompelled by fear. Duty is "the love that constraineth". And there is something more added to duty and privilege in the vocation to Carmel. Love of God in Carmel goes to the Superiors to learn the divine Will, and this same love delights in the orders of the Superiors as the exponents of that Will. For the divine law and the divine will are substantially one, the former the outward manifestation of the latter. And it is "the will of my Father in heaven" (Matt. 7:21) that we are to do, so proving by loving obedience what is that "good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). "He that does the will of God abides forever" (I Jn. 2:17). "It is the will of God" that we are to live (I Peter 4:2); made "perfect in every good work to do His will" (Heb. 12:21); and "being fruitful in every good work" springs from being "filled with the knowledge of His will" (Col. 1:9-10).

This doctrine furnished Mother Mary Elias with a key to a life of mystical experiences which would otherwise have seemed inexplicable; the solutions of perplexities, which without it would have been a stumbling block and a mystery. Part of the difficulty in writing about a saintly person such as Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament is the fact that we, at times, cannot discern or cannot understand that God wishes to make His presence felt experimentally.

In order that we may catch a glimpse of these wondrous blessings, God grants a foretaste of them to His friends on earth. It was thus that he showed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the promised land wherein the chosen people were one day to dwell.

The soul in the mystic union indeed tastes God and rejoices in Him. According to Scaramelli, "this is precisely the office of the gift of wisdom (at least, carried to a certain degree) to render God *present* in the soul, and so much the more present as this gift is the more abundant. This gift brings the soul near to God and it causes her to *feel* and *taste* His most sweet presence" (Tr. III, No. 27).

Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament entered Carmel because this was her supernatural vocation. How well has Pope John XXIII interpreted the value of the contemplative life when, in an allocution to the Cistercian Monks of Monte Cistello (October 20, 1960), he said:

"Our joy is great to find ourselves today in the midst of you, on this 'Monte Cistello' whose name so happily recalls the great memories of your origin. To name Citeaux is to name Saint Bernard; it is to invoke the ardent piety and the joyous austerity of your first Fathers. Then, in the ages following them, it is to recall that immensely long line of holy religious—'turbam magnam quam dinumerare nemo poterat' (A great multitude that no one could count)—who, from the depths of their monasteries, have spread throughout Christendom the penetrating sweetness of a life entirely cut off from the world and wholly consecrated to God: "umbratilem", as Pius XI used to say, 'remotamque a mundi strepitu dementiisque vitam.' (A life removed from the din and follies of the world) 'The contemplative life! Oh, how precious it is in the eyes of God, precious to the Church! We have said it in our letter to your dear and venerated Abbot General: it is one of the essential

bases of Holy Mother Church; it has been present in every phase of her two-thousand-year history, ever fruitful in solid virtues, ever rich in mysterious and powerful attraction for the most lofty and noble souls.

"A life of intimate union with God through love, whose merit was proclaimed by Pius XI, whom we love to cite again, on the occasion of the canonization of the Carmelite Blessed Teresa Margaret Redi: 'In truth,' he said, 'these are very pure and very noble souls who, by their suffering, silently exercise in the Church the most universal and most fruitful apostolate.'

"This is the guarantee of the value, in the Church's eyes, of the contemplative life. Others may give themselves, after the example of Martha, to the external tasks of the ministry; but it is Mary who receives from the Savior's lips the assurance that she has chosen the better part. That part is yours.

"Therefore, beloved Sons, fidelity to the Rule, fidelity to the venerable and holy traditions of the Order. And among these last, we take pleasure in mentioning that beautiful union of charity which makes of all the Trappists of the world one great family—a family which knows no territorial limits, distinctions of province or nation. May this new edifice be henceforth the center and as it were the living symbol of that fraternal union: 'Ecce Quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum!' (Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!)

"From this sanctuary will rise towards God holy psalmody; here will be carried out the 'Opus Dei' (The Divine Office), the official prayer of the Church. Allow us to tell you in the name of that divine Church of Christ how much we are counting, on the eve of the Ecumenical Council, on that prayer of the contemplatives, who, freed from all exterior concerns, can give themselves wholly to this blessed function of intercessors at God's throne!

"Beloved Sons! All these feelings which rise up in Our heart on this visit today, are for you and for all those whom you represent to Us. In closing, we confide them to the Queen of Citeaux, the Blessed Virgin, so admirably celebrated by your great Saint Bernard, and towards whom mount up in the silence of your monasteries each evening, the virile and touching accents of the Cistercian 'Salve Regina.' May she be

here, everywhere, and always, your maternal protector! 'Sedes Sapientiae, Mater Divinae Gratiae, Mater Christi, ora pro eis, nunc et semper. Amen.' (Seat of Wisdom, Mother of Divine Grace, Mother of Christ, pray for them now and always. Amen.)"

Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament recognized God's Hand in the incredible conflict which came upon her life as she began to surrender herself entirely to Him. It was the wisdom of God who uses the soul's inner conflict as an indispensable process of discipline, as a development of the contrast between light and darkness, as an exhibition of the way in which God is glorified in the infirmities of His chosen souls, and in their tests with the power of evil.

"I delight in the law of God according to the inner man" (Rom. 7:22) are the words of Mother Mary Elias after she had learned to say with David: "Oh how I love thy law." (Ps. 119:97) It is only when one is crucified and dies with Jesus that one is buried, rises and ascends with Christ. The new man is the one who makes progress. And this progress is described by Saint John of the Cross in his itinerary of the Ascent of Mount Carmel. There, the Doctor of Carmel tells us how the new man "increases in the knowledge of God" by *not* knowing anything else. The "old" element becomes weaker, and the "new" stronger, and the chosen soul grows in love of God and hatred of sin.

Mother Mary Elias knew that to die to oneself is to "be crucified", to "put off" any confidence in our own ways and in the flesh. (Phil. 3:3) It was putting on Christ which brought her Carmelite vocation to its peak by a gradual renewal of her entire self. And she began to see things in a way that she had never seen them before. She was calm, rejoicing in adversity, with an inward glowing peace, because her death to self had overcome great sorrow and tragedy. The mere knowledge of Carmelite Spirituality, without the experience, will only bring us frustration; but this was not the position of Mother Mary Elias. Hers was the exchanged life: "I live yet not I, but Christ lives in me." (Gal. 2:20); "I labored . . . yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (I Cor. 15:10) "It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father Who speaks in you." (Matt. 10:20)

When Mother Mary Elias undertook the incredible project

of founding Carmels in the United States of America, one of the greatest texts she used to repeat when alone or to her sisters was: "I can do all things in Christ Who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). She said it with St. Paul's same spirit of defiance and to a world much like the one he encountered. This text brought Mother Mary Elias strong encouragement from God. It demonstrated her capacity to live above her circumstances through a strength that was not her own. The letters she wrote when she was "exiled" prove how her entire life was a suffering in the cross of Christ. How many times she had every possible reason for complaint, every reason to grumble and moan, but instead, we know through her correspondence and witnesses still living today how she walked a way above complaints. Far from being a frustrated woman or having a martyr-like affectation, she emerged from every trial as a joyous victor. Her correspondence, like that of Saint Paul, was far from a piteous cry for special prayer to support her in her tragic hours. She used her letters, rather, to build up and encourage her foundations. Mother Mary Elias' secret was, like Saint Paul's, a secret which turned apparent tragedies into glorious triumphs. Saint Paul was able to handle his prison circumstances so that they produced for him a quality of Christian experiences which far surpassed that of most of his readers. Mother Mary Elias also claimed no other joy, no other prosperity, than the secret of possessing the strength of Christ Who empowered her and made her ready for anything. She was equal to anything through Him Who infused inner strength into her. Christ became her sufficiency. This is how Mother Mary Elias saw her vocation to Carmel—as the construction of a temple of God where the Holy Spirit may dwell forever. She offered her body to God and her heart and her mind by the solemn vows of her Holy Order of Mount Carmel. She knew "her body was the temple of the Holy Spirit". (I Cor. 6:19) We become a temple when God accepts and consecrates our dedication. We dedicate, God consecrates; and He did accept and consecrate her. He took up residence in Mother Mary Elias and He dwelt in her forever, with all the reality of the words of Saint Paul to the Ephesians: "In whom all the building fitly framed together grows into a holy temple in the Lord: in whom you also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. 2:21-23)

The spirit of poverty in Mother Mary Elias streamed from the Scriptural text: "You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." (I Cor. 6:19-20) Mother Mary Elias never considered herself the owner of her own self or property. Her duty was to serve her Master Who has purchased her for His Carmel.

From the same Scripture text the reader of these pages may infer the spirit of other aspects of Mother Elias' virtues. If "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many"; if by the Cross Jesus paid the ransom price to set us free, then our allegiance is transferred to the One Who has become our new Owner. To become a Carmelite is to acknowledge in a supreme way, far more than a Christian in the world, the sovereignty of Jesus our Master, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The whole biography of a saint has to speak of how loyalty to Jesus is obedience to Him. In the same way, this Lord of Lords humbled Himself even to the death of the Cross, gasping for breath as the weight of His broken body was lifted up on the crucifying nails.

His example led Mother Mary Elias to enter a relationship of lowly, humble silence with Him in Carmel. "Come to Me," says the Lord Jesus; "share my yoke with Me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Learn from Me, for I am humble and lowly in heart." (Mt. 11:29) It was this humble, lowly Lord, Who attracted Mother Mary Elias' heart to serve Him all her life. Mother Mary Elias, like the disciples, was not humble naturally. She, like them, had to learn from Him. For this and other reasons, which we shall see in this Introduction, we will be able to understand the work of God in the Foundations to which Mother Mary Elias gave her spirit and heart. But this loyalty to Jesus in our dear Mother Mary Elias was challenged many times by Satan at the beginning of her spiritual life and at the end of her Foundations. But, as Christ answered, Mother answered too: "I always do what is pleasing to Him". (John 8:20)

And just as in Jesus' life, those words of Gethsemani seem to be of supreme importance. "Not My will, but Thine, be done" (Luke 22:42); so also, in the life of a disalced Carmelite such as Mother Mary Elias, those words were all she had to challenge Satan. In any temptation, this beautiful soul understood that

Jesus has this supreme authority over all things. If Jesus is the Lord, then she had to accept His authority absolutely.

Years of incredible sufferings followed, of internal and external conflicts, but her loyalty to Christ claimed her all in all. The consequence of this supreme loyalty to Jesus is Mother Mary Elias' self-denial in all her life. "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me." "For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake, he will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" (Luke 9:23-25)

This was our dear Mother Mary Elias' attitude toward her life. Her entire security, according to Saint John of the Cross, remained hidden in Jesus and Jesus only. For her this meant going where obedience sent her; it meant working wherever God called her; it meant offering herself in love to Love, Itself. The Carmelite or Teresian has no other right than to deny herself! She entered Carmel to serve diligently and to go on serving. It does not matter if she is weary, or sick, or has worries of her own; her task is to get on with her work. This is what Mother Mary Elias understood reading the second letter of Saint Peter (5 and 10): "And besides this, having all diligence, add to your faith virtue and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to brotherly kindness charity . . . brethren, have diligence to make your calling and election sure." Mother Mary Elias, like Saint Teresa of Jesus, let nothing disturb her . . . and pressured by the increasing responsibility of her foundations, she overlooked her own sensitivity and her personality to begin to re-produce in herself all the warmth of a Christ-like personality and integrity. And this was the secret of her inner peace. It was a fruit of the Holy Spirit, the Gift of Wisdom. She knew by her inner deeper experiences that before she could live her Carmelite heritage she must be a real Carmelite. This secret and hidden call to perfection is nothing else but the sublimity of the Gospel's doctrine. Otherwise the life of a Carmelite would be an artificial imitation, a piece of barren formalism, performing certain excellent exercises of meditation, prayer and recreation, but destitute of vital force and purpose. To try to live like Carmelites in order to "make" themselves "Carmelites" is forgetting God's

simple plan for His calling to Carmel. Faith in God's call to Carmel is not an attempt, among others, to believe; it is an embrace of His adorable Will. It is not even a love for holiness which characterizes a vocation to Carmel, but the love of God that fills the heart of the girl He is calling to serve Him in Carmel.

God's description of a Carmelite is clearly and well defined in the *Way of Perfection*, the *Interior Castle*, the *Rule*, and the *Constitutions* of Saint Teresa of Jesus, Reformer of Carmel and Doctor of the Catholic Church.

There is nothing vague about what are the essential characteristics of a true discalced Carmelite. Saint Teresa of Jesus knew because of her own experiences that her daughters had to taste the Lord and know after this experience that "the Lord is gracious" (I Peter 2:3); that they have been "begotten again unto a lively hope" (I Peter 1:3); "quickenened . . . together with Christ" (Eph. 2:5); "made partakers of Christ" (Heb. 3:14); "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4) and delivered "from this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4). Such is the life described by Saint Teresa of Jesus in her *Interior Castle*, for her daughters who have found the confirmation of their vocation on the cross of Jesus. The cross makes our vocation an objective call, not dependent on our own subjective sensitivity.

Few Carmelites can remember, like Saint Therese of Lisieux, the first touch of that Cross, but all true discalced Carmelites have the security of an eternal blessing and every night, when they go to sleep, can repeat joyfully the words of Saint John (10:28): "I am in the hands of Christ, and none shall pluck me out." Though the cross which makes us whole does not do so all at once, yet it does work effectually. It begins by an active purification of our natural sensitivity. Then follows a much more heavy cross because now it is the Lord Who is pressing His Hand on the weight of the cross and it becomes a passive rather than active purification. We have to be broken and scattered so that self can no longer be the center toward which we gravitate. The cross forms that center, and in doing so, draws together the disordered fragments of our being. It unites our heart, (Ps. 86:11) producing a wholeness or unity which no object of less powerful attractiveness could accomplish. It is this spiritual health that Saint John of the Cross wishes for his Carmelite daughters when he points to the cross as its

source. From His cross there goes forth the virtue (Luke 6:19) that heals all maladies, be they slight or deadly. For "with *His stripes we are healed*" (Isa. 53:5) and in Him we find "the tree of life" with its healing leaves (Rev. 22:2).

According to Saint John of the Cross in the Prologue of the *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, our cure is not perfected in an hour; but, as the sight of the cross begins it, so does it complete it at last. The cross heals. It possesses the whole virtue of killing sin and quickening holiness. It makes all the fruits of the flesh wither while it cherishes and ripens the fruit of the Spirit, which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Ga. 5:22-25). And thus the cross, where Christ was crucified through weakness (2 Cor. 13:4) becomes, notwithstanding, the fountain-head of power to us. And this power comes to us with the power of truth: "Be not conformed to this world, but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2).

Where the truth is, insofar as it is the truth, there God is and the soul, purified by His Hand, knows this truth in an experimental way! And then it happens that God's Word or God's Revelation is received in the soul by faith, in our reason, enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

Without fear of challenge Jesus could say: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). And turning to His disciples He said: "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14)—Mother Mary Elias believed all her life to be this light coming from the uncreated Light which is Jesus. But being the light, as she understood it, she saw how Elijah, being the "light" of his times, retreated to Karith at the command of the Lord—and in the New Testament, John the Baptist withdrew from the world to live austere in a desert place, apart, subsisting, we are told, on locusts and wild honey. Men went out there to seek him, for even there he was a burning and a shining light. Yet we are reminded that "he was not that light". He came only to bear witness to it. Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament felt and did the same. She knew her potentialities in the world, but she knew God had chosen her for the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. When He called her, He let her know and understand that her light would shine for another side of the mountain. And her Lighthouse would be Jesus in silence, in

suffering, in the Eucharist. Jesus alone, Jesus the true light which enlightens every man, coming to this world, would be her Power; His Spirit would be her strength. In the wilderness of God's Church of today, the life of this silent, discalced Carmelite is a new crying in the wilderness. Her life was guided not only by rules and schedules—as all forms of monasticism are in danger of being misunderstood. Rather, her life was based upon God Himself, where there is peace, a profound serenity of spirit, which kept her tranquil in the face of unspeakable conflict and contradiction. "In the world you will have tribulation", Jesus had said; "In Me you may have peace". (John 16:33). When Mother Mary Elias felt the darkness of interior trials and of exterior persecution, in spite of all the setbacks, her answer was that "all this was too little for God's almighty power." And no matter how deeply and sharply the trial cut her heart, the peace of God, which Saint Paul tells us, is to "garrison our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus", (Phil. 4-7) reigned in her heart.

Mother Mary Elias understood God's method of purifications. In her interior sufferings she remembered how Christ was unmoved, because He abode in the peace of God. How striking is the contrast Mother Mary Elias presents to the world of today — where there is no peace, and all one hears of is great tribulations everywhere. God occupied in her heart the permanent place. Pressures, claims, and needs did no other than bring her back constantly to the Arms of Providence. And in these same Arms she died.

Holiness and peace and joy — with such things is the kingdom of God concerned. Mother Mary Elias was occupied with Jesus alone. She loved Him enough to allow Him perfect freedom in the realm of her mind and purify her, according to the doctrine of Saint John of the Cross. She loved Him enough to give Him full authority to say and to do in her heart all He desired. She gave Him full control of her own heart. Her love for Him carried over into the practical level of a daily routine in Carmel. She left Him free to demand a complete involvement with Him, her Crucified Beloved.

Mother Mary Elias was a very balanced woman, and her psychological balance, infused now with the Gift of Wisdom, allowed her to answer Jesus with a perfectly balanced "Yes".

She opened, once and forever, the door of her will, mind and soul to Him, without any reservation or fear. "God had not given her the spirit of fear" (2 Tim. 1:7). And when the real temptation came, Mother Mary Elias could say: "Temptation is always a pull and a pressure to be independent of God; and the only answer faith gives us for such hours is 'Wherever you go, I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so and so to me, and add more also, if anything but death separate me from you.'" (Ruth 1:16-17)

To write about a Carmelite nun is not to stop at details unless they are of depth, of some transcendent beauty which every act of heroic virtue possesses. To write about a Carmelite such as Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament is to see God's own process of sanctification running its normal course, according to the calling of His grace, and in possession of the inheritance which is "the purchased possession" of a supernaturally gifted soul.

The pages following this Introduction contain the workmanship of God in the soul of this little, quiet nun of the Discalced Order of Carmelites. This Introduction serves only the purpose of presenting a silhouette of her glorious ascent into God's way, heart and will. It gives the reader a clearer view of what God was able to do with a little soul who offered Him no resistance and was obedient to His Spirit up to the last breath of her life.

We can see how since she was chosen for the life of Carmel, God made possible its fulfillment "according to the good pleasure of His Will (Eph. 1:5). All God's purposes are a unity: "To the praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:6). Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament knew how the riches of His grace would show the exceeding kindness of His love if she would simply obey and accept His Gift. Because, though we are the recipients and all this is done in our soul through His grace, this grace is "according to the power that works in us" (Eph. 3:20).

Mother Mary Elias knew that her vocation to Carmel implied a vocation to sanctity, for we are called, "we are chosen to be holy". This call implied many detachments, many sacrifices,

but Christ has given us the power to offer ourselves in the fulness of His love and in the decision of His Call; the fulfillment of our position in Christ. We know very little of Mother Mary Elias' life in the world; of the extraordinary graces she received from God; but we do know a great deal of her life when her attitude towards the flesh, the world and Satan became evident—her entire Carmelite attitude. She knew the darkness of the trials while she enjoyed living "in the heavenlies" with Christ, her Beloved.

Her vocation to Carmel re-oriented her life and her heart to a change in possession. In the writings of Saint Teresa of Jesus and of Saint John of the Cross, Mother Mary Elias learned how to leave the one attitude to allow the Lord to change her completely. The Person of Christ is the center of every heart which belongs to Him. In this position, the quiet and intense life of Mother Mary Elias learned how to lean on Jesus when the crises came. She never expected anything except crosses because this is the sign of a true vocation. Christ had become the only love of her heart. He was the only object of her entire consecrated life. The words of Saint Peter (1 1:15-16), "But as He is holy, so you be holy . . . Be holy, for I am holy", sum up the entire spiritual horizon of her life.

The secret of a Carmelite Nun's holiness is a constant fidelity to the Fruits of the Holy Spirit. St. John 15:16 records the reason of this secret: "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain". The entire secret of God's holiness in a soul is explained here. He chose us for a purpose: our union with Him. We could have not chosen Him. But He could and did choose us, and His purpose is that we should bring forth fruit — but a fruit that would remain.

Carmelite life is a life of constant fruitfulness. Apart from God we cannot produce anything of real value. "How is our fruit to remain?" a Carmelite may ask. The answer is: nothing continues unless it reproduces itself. God reproduces His life in us by maintaining His life, His Spirit in us.

It is a command, not an optional desire: "be fruitful"—The Lord gave us the lesson of this fruitfulness in the same Gospel, John 12:24: "Unless the grain of wheat dies". Mother

Mary Elias knew the ground where she stood; she knew the ground where she was buried under her trials. She knew that this death to self, this mystical death, was indispensable for her everlasting life of fruitfulness in Carmel.

Throughout the Gospels we find the same lesson of "being fruitful". Jesus spoke of Himself as the true Vine and His disciples as the branches. A Carmelite Sister in her cloister (not clamoring outside the enclosure) will find the full meaning of this illustration. Someone has said, "How strange that the Lord Jesus should choose the branches of a vine to represent our relation to Himself, yet how true it is in every respect." There is no beauty in us, there is nothing in us that could possibly make us attractive to God. But the same author continues: "By using the figure of the branches and the vine, the Lord Jesus taught the one basic lesson about fruitfulness which so many of us miss completely. In all His references to fruit-bearing, it is the *vine* that *produces* the luscious bunches of grapes. The branches *bear* the fruit—they do not *produce* it." Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament knew this secret: "The purpose of all flowering life is to bring about the bearing of fruit." The words of Jesus: "I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman" were a great consolation to her heart. God had all the responsibility of her soul. Because of this theological truth, the Gardener is not content when a branch is bearing fruit. He wants "more fruit." In order to get it, He purges the branch. Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament underwent all the purifications, active and passive, described by Saint John of the Cross.

The purpose of the purifications, both of the senses and of the soul, in the writings of Saint John of the Cross, is to bring the process of fruit-bearing. Every test of God contains a seed, which, if properly cared for, will bring more life and a continual renovation to the soul. As our Lord knew how human nature would love to rely on its own efforts, He presented us with the remedy for this illness when He said: "I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman". Saint John of the Cross and Saint Teresa of Jesus, both Doctors of Mystical Theology in the Catholic Church, show us the important lesson contained in this statement. It is God, and God alone, Who is the Vine-dresser or the Gardener. Saint Teresa of Jesus tells her daughters in her *Interior Castle* how God assumes the responsibility

of caring for and controlling the vines. The purifications, especially the passive ones in the Dark Night of the Soul, show us how "Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit". When people today, inside the cloister or outside, wonder what Saint John of the Cross meant by his darkneses, aridity and barrenness of soul, the answer is clear. When a branch is bearing fruit, the gardener comes and "purges it", that it may bring forth more fruit.

This pruning is a painful process. Someone has said, "The tree sends out vigorous shoots in all directions, seeking, as it were, to express its own design of expansion. But when the gardener comes, he imposes his will above the outreach of the tree".

Finally, pruning is a limiting process. The tree is always smaller at the end of the operation—not larger! The biographical notes on Mother Mary Elias' interior life are not all contained in this account of her Life and Spirit, but from notes, letters and witnesses who knew her, I have been able to see how deeply rooted her soul was in God, from whence came forth all her strength, for "without Him she could do nothing". This conviction gave birth to the responsibility of not belonging to herself, the fruit of her passive purification. If Jesus had purified her as His own, she no longer belonged to herself. To become a true Carmelite is to acknowledge this sovereign Lord and to confess we are His possession. This inevitably led Mother to look at herself as the "handmaid of the Lord". From her entrance into Carmel to her last minute on this earth, her life was the confession of this relationship of a lowly and humble heart serving Him in silence, in suffering, in contradictions of every nature and in peace of heart, above all circumstances. Mother Mary Elias understood the lesson implied in the words of the Lord (Matt. 11:29): "Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart." Our dear Mother Mary Elias, like the disciples, was not naturally humble: she had to learn, like they did. And this is the purpose of the passive purification in the doctrine of Saint John of the Cross. It is a revolutionary doctrine which, as the whole Gospel, demands a complete change of attitude. Mother Mary Elias experienced from her early days in Carmel the price of trials in order to be loyal to her own conscience, inspired in its principles by God. But she also suffered the challenge every contemplative soul has

to face, sooner or later, when there are two masters who challenge her decision and her will. Mother Mary Elias confronted the dilemma of two masters at once. Her dark, but not black, faith in God gave her to understand which priority came from God, even if its external appearances would say the opposite. Her answer to any challenge was: "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me." There is no illusion in carrying a cross; there is no romanticism in facing this trial day by day. She came to Carmel "to lose her life for God's love". Jesus was always first, hence she valued her self-denial and complete surrender to Him.

As foundress of many Carmels she knew God had given her many and precious talents. Grace revealed to her how God commands and rewards diligence. And like Saint Teresa of Jesus, the more she understood of her mission to Carmel in Mexico and in the United States, the more diligent she became in His service.

At the end of her life she could only thank God for His distribution of talents and for His faithfulness in keeping all His promises to her. She knew Saint Teresa of Jesus' doctrine and she lived it; therefore her knowledge was always accompanied by a shower of blessings. Her last prayer was a psalm of David: "What shall I render to the Lord for all His bounty to me?" "I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people" (Ps. 116:12-14). And the Lord accepted her gift—her life and death, for it was, by then, more His life than hers.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF REV. MOTHER MARY ELIAS (THIERRY) O.C.D.

It would take one gifted himself with extraordinary talents, a very keen mind, and above all a *tremendous simple Faith* to portray the person of the lively and unconquerable Mother Mary Elias.

Born of a very large family in Mexico City, Aug. 15th, 1879, the baby girl was named "Elena Maria". Her father, Juan Baptiste Thierry of Napoleon's line, married a Spanish woman and they continued living in France until the arrival of the 4th child, when they came to Mexico. All the other children, and there were about twenty offspring, were born in Mexico.

Elena Maria was the second last child and about fourteen years old when her mother died. By that time most of her older brothers and sisters were married or gone from that happy family abode. Four of her sisters had entered the Madames of the Sacred Heart novitiate on the same day. Her favorite brother "Jose" had entered the Jesuits. The family was left with the father, Elena and the youngest Alicia, who later became a Salesian Sister.

When Elena was but four or five years she heard a sermon on Baptism that made a tremendous impression upon her little mind. As a non-Catholic family from the U.S.A. with two boys lived very near her home and these boys frequently came to play with Elena, she proceeded forthwith to repeat the sermon and with such persuasion that the boys wanted to be baptized and be Catholics. Elena solemnly performed the baptismal ceremony upon each boy separately at the fountain in her parents' yard. The boys were seven and nine years old. So at the table that evening they announced to their parents that they were Catholics, baptized by Elena Thierry and must go to Church with her and pray with her. The parents came to the Thierry home for an explanation and Mr. Thierry advised them to send the two boys to the Jesuits, which was the best boys' school in Mexico City, which they did. One became a Jesuit and the other a Doctor.

Elena and her brother Jose used to play Mass at a little makeshift altar in their home. Attending daily Mass with him,

who had made his First Communion, she became extremely curious about the Blessed Sacrament and wanted to receive it too. Jose who seems to have been three or four years older, did his best to make her understand it was impossible. Her next desire was to be in adoration all day before the Monstrance—exposed on certain days at Church. This failing she conceived the brilliant idea that Jose should receive but not swallow our Lord. She had a brand-new little booklet where he was to press his tongue on the clean white sheet, just as he turned from the Communion rail. Like Eve over Adam she won out and Jose brought her the Host in her new book. They had a sort of toy monstrance in which the Host was placed and they kept vigil all day. By evening the parents demanded their presence at table and the whole truth came forth, because they could not leave our Lord alone. Mr. Thierry went for a priest friend who made the two children understand how wrongly they had acted, and of course the distress of their parents left an indelible remembrance.

Elena was attending a large school for little girls and seemed to be the clown of the class. After some tricks that disturbed everyone, the dear old teacher, Madre Dolorita, called the entire class to witness the chastisement she meant to give Elena. The class formed a large circle with Madre in front and Elena kneeling before her. The beloved old Religious had a habit of closing her eyes when giving a serious lecture, probably to avoid seeing the angelic faces before her. She began by telling how serious it was for a little girl to play tricks instead of studying and how it would ruin her future life, etc. . . . All the tots liked Elena and gladly let her be their leader. As soon as Madre Dolorita closed her eyes and began talking, little Elena stood up, made a gesture to the other children to clear a passage for her—and swift as lightning she ran away. When dear old Madre Dolorita asked if she would promise before all her companions to be good and never play such tricks again, no answer came so she opened her eyes to find the victim gone. To her “where is Elena” the children said she had run away at the beginning of the correction.

Senor Juan Thierry was extremely talented in music and when his family was growing up in the lovely home he provided, it was he who organized them in a veritable symphony orchestra. Four of the girls played harps, others the cello, flute, violin,

piano, or other instrument; and most all of them had exceptionally beautiful voices. So, recalling that once great happy home, Mother Mary Elias wiped away a tear from her flashing, snappy black-jewelled eyes and then changed the subject, and none of her daughters would hear of it again. Little Elena who became Rev. Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament, had so gifted a voice that all who heard it considered her as far surpassing all the great artist-singers of her day—even Caruso.

Upon the death of Mrs. Thierry, her father evidently thought at first that he could manage his household alone with his two small daughters. Mother told how one day she hoped to surprise him by cooking a chicken. She killed it and put it into the big pot with feathers and all else. The house was smelling dreadful when her adorable, handsome, and cultured father appeared. He first opened the lid of the once hoped-for good meal and with his usual command of every situation, carried the vessel outside, ventilated the home and then tried to console his disconsolate little daughter. Several episodes Mother mentioned of the time after her loved mother's death, which forced Juan Thierry to consider re-marrying in order to give these last two children everything. Mother told her spiritual daughters that "the lady was very nice and made an excellent housekeeper" but Elena pined away.

It was at this time no doubt that she had a first attack of tuberculosis. After she was better, her father sent her to Our Lady of the Lake Academy in San Antonio, Texas, where Mother had her first formation in English and dealings with Americans. After finishing at Our Lady of the Lake and a Teachers College Course, Elena returned to her father's home and taught school.

Elena had no attraction for the Religious life at this time, but was not satisfied with teaching either, so one day about the age of 25 years, she went to a very saintly priest to confession. Padre Rosas asked Elena to come to see him and in the end of their conversation told her that God wanted her to be a Carmelite Nun. He told her to go to the Monastery (the first in Mexico City) where she would meet a Prioress, Rev. Mother Teresa Maria of the Immaculate Conception, who would understand her rare vocation. Mother Mary Elias told her daughters of the struggle within her to obey, for although she had heard

of the wisdom and holiness of that Prioress, she felt only repugnance to all she knew about Carmel, yet she feared disobeying Fr. Rosas whom she knew to be a real saint. She finally summed up the courage to go and speak to Rev. Mother Teresa Maria, who seemed to know and understand her at once. She entered soon after, and loved and greatly admired Rev. Mother from the start, but it took some time to overcome her built-up dislike for the Community and some of its ways. One little item was that they served goat-cheese daily for dinner. Mother vomited the first day and the second, but all Rev. Mother said to her was "it will take about a week to get accustomed to it", so she bravely kept on taking it and true to Rev. Mother's prediction she rather wanted it by the next week and never again had any trouble with cheese. As Sister Mary Elias could do nothing by halves, and she knew her Faith, could quote Scripture better than most priests, and had been living a real spiritual life even in the world, she now determined to give everything to God as a perfect Carmelite.

As Mother entered before the rulings of Canon Law of 1918, she received the Habit very promptly and made her Profession which was Final at the end of one year. As a young Professed she was with Rev. Mother Teresa Maria one day when the latter looked very concerned, and on being questioned the younger Religious learned that in the City of Queretaro (foundation Carmel of Mexico City—about one hundred years previous) there was one aged Nun, namely Mother Euphrosina, who was begging Mother Teresa Maria for Nuns to come and re-build that Community. Sister Mary Elias urged Rev. Mother to consider this appeal, which Rev. Mother did. Four Carmelites, namely, Rev. Mother Teresa Maria, of the Immaculate Conception, Mother Bernarda Maria del Espiritu Sancto, Sister Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament and another who soon returned to Mexico City Carmel, left for Queretaro.

The saintly Mother Euphrosina almost died of loving gratitude and continually sang her "Nunc Dimittis" to God for sending these Carmelites of so wonderful a spirit to restore her once beautiful Carmel.

Mother Mary Elias young at that time, and with many God-given talents, visualized the tremendous work to be done, and set to work immediately. It took complete trust in Divine

Providence for the Monastery building was not only old, but long years had passed without any repairs and dear Mother Euphrosina existed on alms of food given her by kind benefactors, who just vaguely understood the existing situation. The real problem started when the Diocese used the Nuns' dowries, and forbade them to accept any new applicants. The Community could have reported this deed to Rome, but considered it better to suffer for the time being, hoping a new prelate might restore their rightful property. Therefore our three Mothers had to begin with nothing of this world.

Among the miraculous happenings of the sufferings and exile of Mother and the Sisters from Mexico, there is one incident not recorded. A priest, prisoner too, with Mother and her companion told her he would communicate both Religious as he had on his person several consecrated hosts. Their joy and consolation were extreme and as the priest hurriedly folded the Corporal, he handed it to Mother as a remembrance to pray for him. With great respect Mother pinned it to her clothing over her heart and soon after sewed a linen cloth over the folded Corporal—which she continued to wear day and night. Long months later, Mother and four young Sisters were sleeping in one room and one Sister, who could not sleep, kept seeing night after night a bright light coming from Mother's breast and ascending to the ceiling. This Sister finally told the saintly Father Hilarion (who had directed all of them through their trials in Mexico) about this strange glowing light. Mother told us how it hurt her when he asked "why have you hid things from me?" She avowed that as far as she knew she had been open and honest ever since he began to guide her soul. Father then asked about the light and after thinking seriously, Mother said she had not seen the light—but told of the Corporal, which Father wanted to see. It was very yellow with age, but when unfolded contained a pure-white host . . . In his fear and haste the priest who communicated the two Carmelites had unknowingly left the Sacred Species on this Corporal. We had it under glass in the old Buffalo Convent, where we frequently venerated it, knowing that God was even sacramentally present with Mother through many sorrowful months.

God gave so much to Mother Mary Elias; as a personality so attractive she could charm everyone at first meeting; talents in every line; every artistic ability—aligned to good sense about

every kind of practical work; extremely generous in giving, thinking, acting.

As a certain Bishop that guided her soul said, "she could have been the President of any big Corporation or enterprise, or an actress of fame—or a perfect wife and mother—or what she was, a *simple, humble, prayerful Carmelite*".

Doubtless on account of all these God-given gifts, and her bright sparkling look that seemed to evaluate one at first glance, Mother captivated most people instantly. However the same traits had varied effects upon her daughters. In all this we must take into consideration that our Carmel was really ecumenical in the fact that we had sisters of different nationalities, characters, social status, culture and intellect—united in the one essential of importance, total submission to God with the Holy Rule and sacred customs inspired by the Holy Spirit to Our Holy Mother, St. Teresa as our guide and government.

Many sisters wanted to be like Reverend Mother and would try to imitate her, failing to realize and accept that although we are all Carmelites, God's way for each one varies. Although one sister may be a stately lily, or a fragrant rose, or a gorgeous African-amaryllis, another may be a dandelion or the little May-flower that can only be discovered in the woodlands, in early Spring, by kicking its large lush leaves that keep our Lady's flower so completely hidden. Our Reverend Mother Mary Elias well knew that although we love every sister with a tender, intimate Christlike love, there must be special discipline for each individual case to eradicate past habits of vice and weaknesses which every person reaching maturity has cultivated. All wanted Reverend Mother's esteem but balked at accepting the admonitions that would make them the lovely personality God meant them to be. Frequently Reverend Mother would say with much feeling of disappointment—"when can I cease to use gloves with these Americans". Yet Mother loved and gave her life for Carmel in the United States of America.

Some who knew Mother Mary Elias might think that being a mortal she surely had some failings which have not been mentioned. It seems that from her ancestral heritage and the account of her childhood, it is but natural that she was fiery and her corrections simple and direct, but Mother held no dislike toward anyone, and the least semblance of humility in an erring sister

would make Mother melt in joy and admiration like wax over a fire. Mother told us once she had asked the saintly director, Father Hilarion, O.C.D. "why does God not take away my awful temper when I plead with Him so much?" and Father answered, "He will let you keep it till you die—for with all He has endowed you, some people would almost adore you if they did not see you thus".

In 1919 a Prelate of Silao, Mexico, asked our Mother Mary Elias for Carmelites from her Carmel for a foundation in his diocese. He thought political conditions were then safe and in all events he wanted religious with great fortitude and courage. Mother left with four Professed Sisters on October 5, 1919. The House for the new Carmel had been donated and the Chapel furnished by the Bishop himself, so they could take possession at once. Having seen that all was well and as several good applicants were desiring to enter, Mother Mary Elias appointed the Sisters to their offices and returned to Grand Rapids on October 27, 1919.

The Carmel of Silao prospered in every way but when upheavels in political conditions became rabid again in the mid-twenties, they thought of returning to Grand Rapids. As the Grand Rapids Community had its full quota it was not feasible, and under the guidance of Padre Eleutherio, O.C.D.—they went to Burriano, Spain in 1927. Only two of the original Sisters that had gone forth from Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1919 and one of the first to enter that Community who was already with Final Vows, came to Grand Rapids and were incorporated into that Carmel.

Mother Mary Elias continued to assist the Burriano Community and as needs lessened sent only a large sum of Mass stipends every month, which helped them because of the tremendous difference in United States money and that of Spain. When the Civil War broke loose in July 1936, we were not surprised as most other Nations and people were, for our communications with Burgos, and with many very holy and learned Spanish Priests, we probably saw and understood the situation of our own Sisters better than they themselves for they were too near, and too full of false hopes till it actually began. Their first letter to us had countless lines cut out "censored" mail, so letters back and forth were written in great disguise, but by the grace

of God we understood each other. They leaned upon us as a babe upon its mother. We were so poor during those years of world-wide "depression", so from all human views it would have been impossible to rescue them, but again St. Therese the Little Flower, came to our aid. One day an aged Lithuanian woman came with a child to translate for her, and gave the Extern Sister a roll of bills tied with a soiled cord. They were not Mass-intentions, for the aged lady was going to give those later (which she did). They were a gift she had been saving since the first opening the Carmelites had in 1917, when they left their first tiny home in Grand Rapids for another small house with about 1½ acres of ground, which is their present location. After the benefactress left, the Extern Sister untied the bills, and became frightened for it began to swell, so she called another Sister to help her. It came to about \$1,400.00 which was something unheard of at that period. We were on our way to sing Vespers on the Feast of St. Therese when Mother told us, so our prayers were all in thanksgiving. We investigated and found out that through the Mexican Consul, it was most likely that all those of Mexican birth might be able to get passports to Marseilles, France and our letter went to the Consul himself for safety. As soon as they reached the old Carmel in Marseilles, we cabled their tickets. Only five came at first, on November 17, 1936. Some of the Community were real Spaniards, and a few of the Mexican Sisters were intimidated with the idea of living in the United States of America. However, a few months later they begged to come too and arrived April, 1937. We had obtained everything needed to take care of them and fit up a new foundation. After the second group came, the Sisters suffered from a nostalgia for their homeland and we arranged all transfers for them to return to Mexico. They are the Carmel of the Villa of Guadalupe now.

Reverend Mother Mary Elias not only left behind her the heroic life lived in Mexico and the subsequent encounters in coming to the United States and finally establishing in Grand Rapids, Michigan, but she founded the Carmel of Buffalo, New York in the Spring of 1920. It was before the Beatification and Canonization of the Little Flower but Mother had a tremendous childlike devotion to the future St. Therese. And our Saint showed countless visible signs of God's blessing and her own

particular help to Mother. Frequently the beautiful odor of roses filled the old residence on Cottage Street, Buffalo. The fragrance saturated the most unlikely places, and with it came interior strength. As we young Sisters would say, "just what my soul needed". As Buffalo was such a Catholic city, the people began coming like a swarm of bees down in a cluster on this little Home of prayerful love. This was a blessing but also a source of worry to Mother for she found the novices were being neglected and all were truly green-material spiritually. Our many mistakes and failings must have overwhelmed her but she uplifted our hopes and courage by saying "there is one thing that makes you all pleasing to God—you do have real love for one another". Or again, "I correct you severely but I could not hear anyone else say that you are not good".

The Carmel of Tulancingo, Mexico, had been depending upon us for help for a number of years, so again almost by Divine inspiration, we wrote to the Bishop of Dallas, Texas, asking him to receive them into his Diocese. His answer was, "being a Michigan boy myself, I cannot refuse you". Thus began the Dallas Carmel.

Mother Mary Elias left Buffalo Carmel in 1923 to found the Carmel of Schenectady, New York. An extensive description of these two foundations can be read in Reverend Mother Mary Elias' own account of the "Origin of the Spanish Carmels in the United States".

After a very happy and successful beginning in Schenectady, Reverend Mother Mary Elias had several recurrences of ill-health (which plagued her through life) and believing she needed help of more experienced Carmelites, she begged Bishop Gibbons, to bring three older Sisters from Grand Rapids to assist her, just in case she would die leaving a very young Community, with no leader of mature spirituality. At that time there was little available in the English language about Our Holy Parents St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross, and none of her young daughters were versed in Spanish.

The Bishop kindly agreed and wrote to the Bishop of Grand Rapids about a "loan" of the three Sisters named by Reverend Mother Elias.

Meanwhile, the Most Reverend Bishop Gibbons attended the Bishops' Meeting in Washington, D.C. and visited the Discalced

Carmelite Fathers of that city. Upon his return the hitherto very paternal and loving Bishop was completely changed in his dealings with Reverend Mother.

The Fathers had advised him to get Sisters from the New Orleans Carmel, and to send Reverend Mother Mary Elias back to Grand Rapids. At the same time the Prioress of Grand Rapids received an atrocious letter from the Prior of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers of Washington, denouncing Reverend Mother Mary Elias with horrible insinuations. Among them Father said both he and his companions were convinced that "Reverend Mother would die out of the Order". Other vehement statements were written, which made it clear to us, why the good Bishop acted as he did. Reverend Mother always exonerated the Bishop, saying "if I had been told so many evil things of His Excellency, and from apparently such reliable sources, I might have feared him too". Mother never failed to pray for that Bishop and held him in high esteem.

All through the years Mother Mary Elias had kept in touch with the saintly Father Hilarion, O.C.D., who had left Mexico during persecution days, and was working in Lima, Peru. Naturally she confided this sad affair to him, and he begged her to come to Lima, where the ancient Carmelite Monastery was in sore need of help. So, dear Mother left Grand Rapids again with two Sisters for Lima, Peru, where the Prioress was more than happy to welcome them. Many of the abuses of Teresian observance that had crept into that Carmel, were corrected, for most of the Sisters willingly co-operated, and we hope they have continued to be real daughters of Our Holy Mother, St. Teresa of Jesus.

Knowing how Reverend Mother Mary Elias suffered physically, and realizing from frequent letters that her condition was becoming worse, the Community in Grand Rapids, implored her to return to her rightful home—Carmel. Mother returned to Grand Rapids where she remained until her death. During the rest of her life, Reverend Mother helped rather indirectly with the foundation of Detroit, and worked most diligently in the transferring of the Carmel of Tulancingo, Mexico, to Dallas, Texas, and another in Culiacan, Mexico in 1940. All her life Mother was heroically generous in helping needy Carmels from the meager funds of her own Carmel and alms she begged for

them from many sources.

On feast days or celebrations, Mother was sometimes alerted to the fact that certain people were coming to hear her magnificent voice. Her daughters dreaded this because Mother would then refuse to sing, and at the last minute they would put aside the beautiful hymns they could not sing without her voice, and manage with something very inferior. Mother truly sacrificed the use of that gifted voice to God alone. She was severe with Sisters who tried to trill or use any theatrical ways in singing, for we must mean what we sing as praise to Him alone.

A multitude of small deeds that proved her generosity could be given, and they were more valuable in God's sight because of her poor health. One very touching incident is how she got up at night with the oldest lay-Sister to scrub the floor, clean the sooty chimney, etc. in the old kitchen, to surprise an ignorant postulant, because the latter was so new at this job.

One time after a siege of illness, our Mother told at recreation how she dreamed that she saw new Carmels springing up, just like many "stars studding the sky at night". She knew it was only a dream but pondered "I wonder just what God means?" Surely He meant that her daughters through the future were destined to keep Our Holy Mother St. Teresa's spirit as pure and bright as stars. Star differs from star, but each has a given destiny and with a Carmelite vocation this becomes as clear as the noon-day sun as we grow in knowledge and love of our Divine Crucified and glorious Spouse Jesus.

Mother suffered many long and severe illnesses. It was not only to her daughters that she seemed heroic under these sieges, but many very famous doctors looked upon her as unique and with a fortitude, the likes of which they had never witnessed. They considered it a privilege to attend and give their time and very best skill to her at all times—and thus to her Community. Near the end of her life a doctor visited her and told the infirmarian how huge and fast the last cancerous tumor had grown, commenting "if it were anyone else than Mother, I would say, she has only three to four days at most—but you know, Sister, everything is different with Mother".

One time the Bishop insisted Mother should be taken to the Mayo Clinic at once. After much examining the doctors wanted to wait till a certain famous doctor returned from his vacation,

to do the surgery. The evening of the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel her condition became perilous. Crews of doctors came in, shaking their heads, and Mother seeing their doubt of doing anything for her, said, "don't tell me that among 500 doctors there is not one capable of operating on me—I am not that important". About 11 P.M. Dr. Charles Mayo himself came in, and in a few minutes said, "Mother, I am going to operate on you at once". Her response was, "oh, Doctor, such an honor to have you—thank you. What are all these doctors afraid of? Nobody dies till they stop breathing. I promise I will not stop". During the surgery, as they could only give a "spinal", Mother made them all laugh by saying, "Hurry, Doctors, I'm still breathing". After the operation Mother was just coming out of the anesthetic and asked Sister standing beside her, "what time is it?" "1:30 a.m." Mother began to cry "and I am still here, our Blessed Mother did not take me".

After the Dedication of the new Monastery and Chapel in Grand Rapids, three Bishops who were present for the ceremony came into the Infirmary to give Reverend Mother their blessings and thank her for her work for Holy Mother Church and the Grand Rapids Diocese. Upon leaving the enclosure they all said they expected her to be gone in twenty-four hours. Instead that night, Mother was rushed to the hospital.

The Rector of the Seminary with several Professors, visited Mother in the hospital after classes the next day and as they saw her amid oxygen tent, tubes in her nose, and every possible medical contraption, they turned to the Sister attending her and sadly shook their heads. Mother saw it and remembering that Sister had just said, "Monsignor says they cannot have the Solemn High Mass of the Dead for our benefactors tomorrow", she opened the tiny breathing window of the tent and said, "Monsignor, you and two others go to the Monastery tomorrow and sing that Mass". "Reverend Mother, I have classes in Greek and Latin lasting most of the morning". Mother came forth with "You have that Mass, then go to your class; Say 'Kyrie eleison' and explain it to those boys—then the class in Latin—'Agnus Dei'—give them a good sermon on its meaning". From woebegone faces, the four Priests left smiling, assuring her they would sing the Mass next day.

The sufferings in Mother's life were not only physical. They came from many sources, as from postulants who were dismissed

and gave erroneous reasons for leaving to our Discalced Carmelite Fathers or other Priests. Some letters from these Priests were abominable, wherein they accused Mother of unheard of things all satanically inspired as those of us who lived with her could prove. Other crushing temptations which would seem so vitally true to her, that the little Sister to whom she confided these purifications would have to prove to her they were all from Satan or fantastic wild dreams. Then, great as Mother was in countless ways and so capable, she suffered much over the failings of the Sisters. One of her last admonitions to her Sister Secretary and Nurse, etc. was, "You will have no difficulty in managing business affairs, they are all second nature to you, but you will be crucified by vocational problems as I have been. That is something we never get accustomed to".

Mother's external achievements, although all for the Order of Carmel, were all secondary to her. Her gigantic Spirit of Faith and her solid love of God were the "powers" in her life. The Sister with her through crucial illnesses and other trials, declares that when Mother was only half-conscious under excruciating pain, she would be constantly murmuring "poor Jesus, poor Jesus". When Mother would ask "what day is it?" naming the day meant nothing, but if Sister began to sing the first few words of the Introit of the Mass, Mother would faintly smile and then give the day, for her day was centered around the Mass.

Mother had taught us to make a list of all the Prelates and Priests for whom we wished to pray. Each Sister had her own and we had a schedule of offering something every hour of our long day for them. It became so much of a part of our life that each Sister in dying proved that this pious custom was with her to the end.

During the last months while Mother was writhing with pain, she seemed to have her Prelates and older Priests to one side of her tiny bed and the younger and very young on the other side. In moments of intense agony she kept putting forth her hand saying "for these". As she always pointed either to the Prelates or the very young Priests, and this went on for hours, Sister said, "Mother, what about these older and medium Priests?" and she faintly answered, "they don't need it like these others".

Mother well knew that she was full of cancer in her last

years and told the Doctors so, although they insisted that it was not true. So she warned the Sister infirmarian "do not let those Doctors come in and give me pain killers, for I want to suffer all I can for Jesus, the Church, priests, all of you. I will tell you when I need relief". As she was well known to the best Doctors in the City, they would call to inquire about her, saying "Sister, why will you not let us see Mother?"—"Well, Doctor, just what would you do seeing her in moments of intense pain?" "Sister, you know as well as we do that nothing but morphine can quiet her agonies". "Well, Doctor, that is exactly why Mother does not want any of you great Doctors to visit her, although you are convinced of her admiration and affection for you." On Valentine's day, Mother called Sister and said, "take care of me now, for I am going to die, and this week you can tell those Doctors, maybe I need a few hours of rest". It was then that Mother began begging pardon and forgiveness of her little helper, while the latter wept and remonstrated, "Oh, Mother, you have always been God's Adorable Hand forming me,"—but the saintly dying Prioress insisted "let me speak, I must say all this before I go". Only in eternity can the perfection and sacred beauty of this intimate humiliation of this magnanimous soul be comprehended. Later Mother said, "I want to beg pardon of each one. I'll tell you to call them." A few were called but exhaustion and weakness stopped it. However, when the Bishop came to see her and asked the privilege of anointing Mother, the Bishop himself wiped away tears as he listened to her asking pardon of her Community with the humble, sweet sincerity of a child.

A few more days passed during which our Reverend Mother suffered excruciatingly without any complaint. As she refused all medicines, which we knew at this point, would only be pain-killers and tranquilizers, there was a lesson in heroism and holiness for all of her daughters, surpassed only by contemplating Our Divine Spouse in His Crucifixion. Amid this excessive pain, there was not only a peace and serenity of spirit about Mother, but the same spirit exhaled to all her daughters, wherein they slightly participated in her future joy and peace. As her lungs, chest and throat filled with fluid, it was impossible for Mother to speak audibly, but through her eyes, those dark enchanting jewels, we could read and understand so much, even better than with words. It was in this atmosphere, surrounded by all her

spiritual daughters, that our loved Mother breathed her last on Sunday, February 28, 1943.

The Most Reverend Joseph C. Plagens, Bishop of Grand Rapids, begged to officiate and all the Monsignors and Priests of the Diocese attended the funeral Mass which was beautifully sung by the Seminary Choir. The homily was given by the Rector of the Seminary, who had been Confessor and spiritual Father to the Community for many years.

Reverend Mother Mary Elias was buried in the Catholic Cemetery, that was on a hill in view of the Monastery. Some years later Mother's remains and all the Carmelites buried in that Cemetery were brought to the Monastery Garden for burial.

ORIGIN OF THE SPANISH CARMELS IN THE UNITED STATES

Foundations of Grand Rapids, Silao, Buffalo and Schenectady.

ACCOUNT GIVEN BY REVEREND MOTHER M. ELIAS
FOR THE CHRONICLES OF THE ORDER.

From the time that Francisco Madero declared war upon President Porfirio Diaz in 1910, the Revolutionists attacked the Church on all sides. Priests were forced to discontinue their priestly offices; churches were closed; Sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion were given only at the risk of the priest being shot on the spot if caught, and many gave their lives in this manner.

The churches were profaned, the altars without the Holy Sacrifice, the confessionals burned in the public squares, sacred edifices were turned into barracks and stables, the Most Blessed Sacrament scattered on the ground, and even mixed with the hay and oats and fed to the horses. The sacred vessels were put to the most profane uses, the Monstrance containing the Most Holy Sacrament riddled with bullets, the priestly vestments used to adorn lewd women, and even the horses were decked with the copes taken from the churches.

The fury of the Revolutionists seemed to be directed chiefly against the priests and religious communities. Through mockery they used corporals and purificators as handkerchiefs, and every time they used them they cursed God, and the Catholic Church. The most beautiful copes and chasubles, the most expensive embroideries were put on the horses for decoration as horsecloth. The stoles adorned the necks of the horses and crossed over the breast, and the birettas were tied on the horses' tails. These things I have seen with my own eyes.

After long months of not having the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the Churches because the Government collected all the keys of the Church, saying that it was the only administrator and the owner of all the Catholic Churches, occasionally the bell would ring and the people would come in crowds, hoping to hear

Mass. After long waiting a priest would come out and begin to say Mass, but at the "Dominus Vobiscum" he would utter a blasphemy, cursing God and at the same time cursing the people, by which it was discovered that wicked men dared to put on the sacred vestments and thus profane the Sacrifice of the Mass. When the people discovered the trickery, they would turn back immediately, finding then the doors closed; while others were seated in the Confessionals hearing confession, and after having heard a good many of them would come out and publish what they heard, stating that there was no difference between the priests and themselves.

Nuns and Sisters of the different Orders and Congregations would be seen in the streets and in dance halls, or driving in machines, drunken and in the company of men. By their painted faces it could be discovered that they were wicked women wearing the habit of the nuns, discrediting the Catholic Church.

In the Archdiocese of Mexico alone there are about one thousand churches, counting parishes and chapels. With the exception of few, all of them suffered during the revolution, and many churches were destroyed completely. In Zacatecas, Mexico, there were committed the most horrible crimes against the priests. They were taken prisoners, a hundred at a time, and in order to rescue their lives they were commanded to give a hundred thousand dollars within twenty-four hours. After all their property was confiscated it was impossible for the priests to give one hundred pennies, so they were sent out to beg, (each one being guarded by four soldiers), bare-footed, amongst the people, in order to obtain the hundred thousand dollars by noon of the same day. They were not allowed to ride in machines, nor on horse-back, but were sent like dogs and treated worse. The people ran to their assistance. The women deprived themselves of everything they had. It was pitiful to see the poor depriving themselves from their last penny in order to help their priests. The whole City was mourning, and in the streets could be heard the women crying for help in order to save them. Among them were some old priests, white haired and very venerable, and many of them fell unconscious on the streets on account of the terrible heat (as they were not allowed to wear hats nor anything to protect them from the sun). At six o'clock in the afternoon they returned to the court with only seventy-five thousand dollars, as

the people were already in great misery, and the rich had lost all they possessed. They were, however, not satisfied with this trial, and the next day they sent them back again. Women were seen in the streets kissing the foot-prints of the priests, as many of them on account of their long journey, had wounded their feet, and left their traces in blood, for the love of Jesus Crucified, to whom they had consecrated their services. The next day, after they had walked so many miles, being so exhausted, as they were not allowed to eat anything until they had collected the complete amount of one hundred thousand dollars, they returned with a few pennies, which amounted to twenty-one thousand dollars only. As the day before they had collected seventy-five thousand, there was four thousand missing to complete their rescue, so four of the most venerable of the priests and those who were held as saints, for whom the people had great respect, were sentenced to the most horrible death. They were still bound when the four "martyrs" were separated from their companions. When the young priests saw who had been chosen as victims, and as they had great veneration for these old priests, they offered themselves to take their places, and be killed instead, but the soldiers replied brutally: "No, you are young and you can collect more money for us, while these old folks we can send to their eternal rest." (mocking them). Then the soldiers took the four priests, and cutting their skin below the elbows pulled it down over their wrists, and tying their wrists with very coarse ropes they were tied to horses which ran wild through the streets, and in a few hours no traces were left of them. I met the mother and sister of one of these venerable old priests, and their minds were affected with the grief.

While these priests were dragged in the streets the other ninety-six were told they were going to be set free, and were then put in freight cars where pigs and cattle were transported. In this way they were obliged to travel all the night, standing, after being so tired, with the hope of really being set free, and not knowing that at the end of their journey they would be again taken prisoners by the cruel revolutionists.

The same treatment (or something very similar) was given to the clergy in all the other cities of the country. In Guadalajara, five hundred priests were exiled at once, and when at the depot, waiting for the freight-cars in which they were to travel, bands

of music were brought by the Revolutionists, playing, "La Golondrina" ("Good-bye, Good-bye to my dearest country, Good-bye, Good-bye to the crib where I was born; Good-bye, Good-bye to all my dearest sisters, Good-bye, my mother, for ever Good-bye.")

The Archbishop of Durango, being at the age of eighty-two years, was taken as a chauffeur to one of the Revolutionists, and after being six months in prison, having for a bed the bare ground of the basement, he had to clean the horses, not only of his master, but of many other soldiers. He had to serve their tables, and eat from the garbage. As the Venerable Archbishop could not walk fast on account of his old age, he was beaten almost every day, until the people rescued him for the sum of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars.

Besides the priests, the nuns also suffered greatly. With the exception of a few communities all the sisters lost their convents and all they possessed, as well as all source of income. They were put out of their convents without a chance to take anything, not even a change of clothes, although many nuns tried to save *their breviaries* and disciplines.

They were often unable to leave the country, although they remained at a peril of their lives and even greater dangers, of the depreciation of Mexican money at that time, and many had to return to the world, to live disguised as seculars at their homes, or in other secular houses, and not even could two be together in safety.

Some who persisted in living together, although in disguise, were found out by the soldiers and suffered incredibly. The Discalced Carmelites of San Angel, Mexico, were twice put in prison for no other reason than that they were praising God by the recitation of the Divine Office. The Franciscan Sisters of Queretaro, the Sisters who spent their lives in relieving the sufferings of humanity in the hospitals they conducted, only because they showed mercy to the wounded soldiers of the Government, were taken prisoners and placed in one room in the basement of a house. This room gave them neither light nor air, and admitted the rain to such an extent that for much of the three months they were detained there, the water covered the floor from six to twelve inches deep. The sisters had no clothes with which to change, and the only nourishment they received was the left-overs or garbage from the soldiers mess.

The Madames of the Sacred Heart in Guadalajara, in the class-rooms with their children, found their doors thrown open by the entrance of a hundred men. Twenty minutes were given them to leave the Convent, to make arrangements for the safety of forty-seven nuns and three hundred children. They were turned out without any place to go or any means to take care of themselves. Two hours later the convent was emptied, all the furniture sold for a few pence through the windows, and the beautiful convent turned into barracks for a rough soldiery.

Practically the same treatment was given to all the Communities in Mexico, leaving the Religious without shelter or means of maintaining themselves.

In Durango the Convent of the Carmelite Nuns was three times burned by the Revolutionists, and only because the nuns were heard saying the Divine Office. They were at Matins when flames burst through the floor from a fire begun in the basement, and all means of escape was cut off but one small window. Another time they escaped by a narrow ladder from the roof, and the third time the convent was entirely demolished, while the nuns, in their habits and white mantles were carried off to prison rejoicing like the early Christians at the opportunity they had to suffer something for Christ.

In addition to these exterior sufferings, which in many cases resulted in new martyrs for Jesus Christ, some Communities of Sisters were subjected to sufferings and outrages unspeakably worse, in which their purity and vows of chastity were violated, and they were subjected to unspeakable slavery as the helpless, innocent victims of bestial men. The things which happened to some poor sisters were unspeakable. In some cases they seemed to be safe during the day, but at night the soldiers would come by the roofs, enter the convents, and carry off and outrage the Sisters.

The Community of San Angel, Mexico, had the protection of the King of Spain, who gave free passes to them, and with the exception of three of their nuns who remained in the City of Mexico to see if they could save the foundation, all went to Spain. The foundation at Tulancingo which had just been started, all went to Cuba, and after the revolution had somewhat abated they returned to Tulancingo.(*). In the Archdiocese of Mexico (*). Carmelite Sisters from Tulancingo are now in Dallas, Texas 1928.

alone there were six convents of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns, and twelve in other cities, namely: Durango, Puebla, Morelia, Queretaro, Toluca, Orizava, Guadalajara, San Angel, Tulancingo, Ameca Ameca, Celaya. In the Archdiocese of Puebla there were two convents, and also in the Archdiocese of Guadalajara.

All these communities of Discalced Carmelite Nuns, of the country of Mexico, during the time of the revolution lost their convents; their properties and dowries were confiscated, and having lost all means of income they were reduced to the direst misery. There were communities living in stables after the revolution was somewhat appeased, with no other food but barley from which they made tea, and drank it without sugar. The two communities of Guadalajara were disguised for seven years and after the Revolution they tried to live together, and as they were so poor, and all means of income cut off, and they were unable to gain their living for fear of being discovered, nor could the people come to their assistance. There was no place for the nuns except in the slums.

The Discalced Carmelite Fathers had forty monasteries some of them in the same cities as the nuns, and they also lost all their monasteries; their churches were profaned; and those who were Spaniards were exiled while the Mexicans were put in prison and suffered the same ill-treatment as the clergy. There was one Spaniard in Queretaro, Fray Gabriel, whom I knew at the time we were there (who is now in Chili). He said he was not afraid of the revolution, and did not want to imitate the others who went to Cuba, Spain and the United States for safety, and that he loved the excitement. When Queretaro was taken he dared to stand at the door of his Monastery, wearing his habit, and bare-headed, amusing himself at the entrance of the revolutionists who were mutilating each other. The crowd seized him and obliged him to mount on a donkey's back. His scapular was tied to the tail of the donkey, and his habit spread over the animal, and his bare feet (although wearing sandals) hung at the sides. He was mocked by the crowd and dragged all over the City, and then left almost dead. Then he was put in prison for several weeks, where he had no comfort whatever, and the only position he could take was to stand all the time, as there was so much water in the basement that he could neither kneel nor sit, and his only consolation was his breviary, which he managed to

get through one of the sanctuary boys. He paid a large amount of money to someone to bring him a stone to sit on, and after having paid the man he is still waiting for it. Through the kindness of many of the people who paid a large amount of money to rescue him, he was finally delivered from prison, and immediately left for New Orleans, and from there went to Cuba to be re-united with his fellow companions, where they had a great joke at his daring to stay in the midst of the revolution "because he enjoyed excitement."

When I heard that Durango had been taken by the Revolutionists and the convent of the Carmelites had been burned, I began to fear something similar might happen to us, as Durango was only five hundred miles from the City of Queretaro where our convent was situated. I was then Prioress for the first time, and naturally I went to Reverend Mother Teresa, the former Superior, for advice as to whether it would be good to get shoes and dresses to disguise the nuns in case the soldiers might assault the City. Instead of getting comfort from her I got a good scolding: "Oh, you young people have such little faith! There is no necessity of getting any shoes or dresses as I hope our Blessed Mother will not forsake her children. I do not think we will ever have to leave our convent," she added. This left me in my anguish without deciding anything. I consulted my confessor as to what would be best to do, because many convents had never dreamed that anything would happen, and the next day the nuns were driven out. So my confessor advised me that while the merchandise was still cheap to buy the necessary shoes for the nuns (as everybody knows that a Carmelite never wears shoes, but sandals), and I borrowed dresses from our neighbors and benefactors (and Blessed be God, the dresses at that time were modest and not so scandalous and immodest as they are now.) As soon as I got the shoes and dresses I hid them in the attic without saying a word to anyone.

One month after, the report was received that San Luis Potosi was taken (being only two hundred miles from our convent), so the Prelates and the Priests got excited and all tried to escape, and the order was given to us by the Vicar General to dissolve the convent, to consume the Blessed Sacrament, to disguise the nuns, and divide them amongst their families, and the novices and postulants who were twelve in number, to

send them all home. When Mother Teresa heard the command of the Vicar General, and the strict obligation to dissolve the convent, she asked me with the most pitiful face: "Now what shall we do? No one has shoes or dresses!" and I answered her reverently, "Never mind, God will provide." "Provide! when everything is so expensive, and we have not a penny?" (Things had gone so far by that time that a pair of shoes of the cheapest kind was worth fifty dollars, and everything else, such as food and clothes, were equally as high.) Mother insisted: "What are we going to do?" "Mother, dear," I answered, "do not worry, God will provide", and going up to the attic I brought twenty-one pairs of shoes and over forty dresses, two for each, with the necessary wigs (which we had made ourselves, without Mother Teresa noticing us, from the hair of the novices and all those who had made profession in that house.) When Mother saw that, she forgot the grief, and gave thanks to God "*For the young people who had such little faith,*" and we all celebrated the occasion. Then I read the order of the Vicar General, and I told them that it was God's Will. It was a very bitter obedience, but in order to save the country we had to make all kinds of sacrifices. All the sisters knelt down to receive the obedience, and striking their breasts with the most sincere contrition of their hearts, they blamed themselves, saying: "Oh, this is a punishment due to our tepidity. Let us now accept the cross." The novices and postulants were melted in tears as there was no hope for them but to go home and destroy their vocations. Amongst those postulants was our present Sister Angela, Sister Solitude, Sister Anna, Sister Elizabeth, and Sr. Magdalen, who as postulants followed us wherever we went. I then recommended my nuns that this was the time to do more penance than ever. I gave them permission to do as much as they could, using prudence not to harm their health, and at the same time I advised them to take this obedience of leaving the enclosure and live amongst the seculars, as an occasion to do the work of an apostle. The youngest always submitted to the eldest, and they never performed anything without asking permission of one another. We never took our habits off, but on top of the habit we wore a secular dress which was very uncomfortable, and especially on account of the heat. In the meantime we were totally deprived of all the consolations of the Church, and it was only occasionally

that we could get to hear Mass and go to Confession.

We had in the convent a little child, seven years old, whom God had inspired to be a Carmelite, and after having obtained the permission of the Bishop for her to live inside the enclosure as a postulant, she had already passed one year in the Community. (She was a sister by blood to one of our Professed Nuns, Sister Mary of the Incarnation). We then decided to place her in an Academy in Aguascalientes, with the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. It was here that later on, one of our Sisters found shelter from the Revolutionists and stayed hidden for three months.

When we had already accepted the sacrifice and were ready to be divided amongst the seculars, we received a notice from the Vicar General stating that provided we emptied the convent, we could live together in some very small house which would not call the attention of the Revolutionists. Imagine the happiness of the sisters when such a sweet obedience came to us—to leave the Monastery but permission to live together in a small house. We made the necessary arrangements and we moved the same day to a very small house. There was no way in which to have cells for twenty-one, as there were only three rooms. One we dedicated for the Chapel, the other two we had for Refectory, Community Room, and everything. (We had to live with the same family who owned the house and only three rooms were given us.) This good benefactress was the Mother of the Mother Sub-Prioress. Although her heart was very big, her house was very small. In that house we wore the habits but no toques and veils. We wore the wigs instead so as to be ready in case of any emergency, and at the same time to get accustomed to the wig. We were not quite three weeks there when the revolutionists attacked the city, and a command was given to disguise immediately, consume the Blessed Sacrament and leave. As the revolutionists were especially seeking for two of our sisters, Sr. Guadalupe and Sr. Magdalen, who before entering the convent had been very popular in the world and young men were seeking for them, in order to take them away with them, as it had happened in some other cases. In this case there was no safety for them in any place in that city. Wherever they might go they could be caught. For this reason Mother Teresa advised me to take these two sisters and two other Professed Sisters who were also

in danger, and seven of the novices and postulants, to the City of Aguascalientes which was ten hours distance from Queretaro, the place where our convent was situated. She obtained the permission from the Vicar General for me to leave and I resigned my office as Prioress to her, so that she could attend to the other half of the Community as I said above.

A year before this excitement we had decided to start a foundation in Aguascalientes on account of the numerous vocations, and for this we were training some of the novices and postulants to be taken to the new place. We had already received permission from the Holy See for the Canonical Erection of the new convent, and I had been appointed Prioress of the new foundation (always the new foundations and the hard work belongs to me). We had, however, postponed this foundation on account of the revolution. A rich lady (Miss Julia Magallanes) had donated the house in which to begin our foundation, and the Bishop Vadespinio had accepted it, although he had already sought safety himself, in San Antonio, Texas, where he stayed with the Sisters of the Incarnate Word for some time.

The Sisters who were appointed to go with me to that foundation were:

Sr. Mary Guadalupe of the Bl. Sacrament, Sub-Prioress,
Sr. Margaret of the Sacred Heart, Mistress of Novices,
Sr. Mary of the Incarnation,
(all professed religious).

Sr. Mary of the Angels (novice)

Sr. Magdalen of Jesus (novice)

Sr. Elizabeth of the Bl. Trinity (novice)

Sr. Mary of the Cross (novice)

Sr. Dolores of the Holy Face (novice)

Sr. Mary of the Bl. Sacrament (novice)

Sr. Solitude of the Bl. Sacrament (postulant)

Sr. Mary of Jesus (postulant)

Sr. Mary of St. Joseph (postulant)

Sr. Mary of the Sacred Heart (postulant)

Sister Teresita and her little sister (who were placed in the Academy of the Immaculate Conception, as we said above).

Although Mother Teresa had consented to this separation, and especially on account of the circumstances, when the hour came for parting she felt it very keenly, and she wanted to

postpone it until a later date. However, being convinced of the necessity of our starting at once, she finally made the sacrifice. We left on June 13, 1913 and we leave it to the imagination of the reader to guess how we suffered at this separation, as we were leaving our sisters who had already been put out of their convent, and must be divided amongst seculars; while we, ourselves, did not know what dangers we would encounter on our way.

The house which Miss Julia Magallanes had donated to the Community, in which to start the new foundation, had already been prepared by her people. (This young lady was among our novices—Sister Mary of the Blessed Sacrament—and after giving away all her property she entered our Community at Queretaro on October 15, 1912). We took possession of the new Carmel in silence, although the city was very quiet, there being no sign of revolution. We had been advised to do this through fear that the news of a new convent would call the attention of the City, and we were trying to hide ourselves from the revolutionists.

Our Lord was kind to us in that little house. We were given permission to have Mass every day, but could not reserve the Blessed Sacrament for the sake of precaution. As soon as we arrived we started the observance of our holy Rule in full vigor, with strict silence. We did not even forget to have the skull in the refectory, as that was the principal thing we took along with us. (It was the skull of a Carmelite Nun whom we venerated as a saint—Mother Mary Carmel of Jesus—who had been Mother Teresa's Mistress of novices.)

As the Carmelite Fathers were in that City they gave us great help. Rev. Father Edward, who is now the Provincial in Oklahoma City, was the Prior, and he loved the Community tenderly, and as a good father provided us with the necessary food and other provisions. He heard the confessions of the Community and gave us the most beautiful instructions on the religious life, and we were almost settled in a couple of months, there being no signs whatever of a revolution. The piety of that city was great and the churches, as usual, were always crowded and there was no fear whatever.

The City of Queretaro (where our sisters were) was taken the very next day after we left. Mother Teresa received the command of the Vicar General to distribute the Blessed Sacrament

amongst the sisters, because it was known that that very night, the revolutionists intended to attack the place where our sisters were. Mother Teresa hastened to comfort them with the Blessed Sacrament at four o'clock in the afternoon of the 14th of June (the day after we left), distributing the Sacred Hosts herself with trembling hands, giving as many to each as she possibly could, because the ciboriums had been filled that very morning, as they had not expected the danger to be so close at hand. The sisters were divided amongst their own families, and those who had no relatives were placed with the best families. It was a great blessing to know that all our sisters were with very pious people who procured for them a little room separated from any contact with the people, bringing them their meals. These little rooms were converted into oratories, so in this manner our sisters were able to preserve the spirit of recollection, and they remained perfectly happy doing God's will. Mother Teresa used to go every day to visit them, asking an account of what they had done, and giving them their permissions for the next day.

We could realize the mercy of God towards us, because while we were quiet, keeping our Rule as best we could, and doing penance to the full extent of our strength for the sins of the country, and begging God's grace to sustain ourselves in the midst of the revolution, other communities had not the same chance. They were obliged to live amongst seculars as their guests and made to join in any dancing or amusement that was going on, and there was no way to escape. In this way many vocations were lost, and when the chance came for those sisters to return to their convents they did not like to go back. Others were put in prison and received all kinds of ill treatment; many were taken by the soldiers and forced to live with them and serve them, while others were shot.

Our Lord did not permit our sisters in Queretaro to enjoy that peace long. Soon after the cross showed itself, and it seemed as if they had been in that quiet recollection as a preparation for a new battle. Very soon they were discovered by the revolutionists, and they were forbidden to be two together.

Our Mother Teresa then had to change them to different places, and the people became so frightened to keep nuns in their company, that many times they refused to take them in, even some of the families of our own sisters (either obliging them

to live in society like the rest of the family, not allowing them to follow their accustomed routine of the religious life, much less to be separated quietly in their rooms), or to go some place else. Our sisters preferred to live with strangers rather than with their own families.

As Mother Teresa knew the peace we were enjoying in Aguascalientes, she wrote to me for help, planning to transfer the rest of the community to that place. To this the superiors of Queretaro opposed, notwithstanding the imminent danger of the sisters. Mother Teresa pleaded and insisted but the permission was refused three times. Knowing her trouble I really came to her assistance. I wrote to Rome, asking permission to transfer the community for good, to Aguascalientes, on account of the revolution, and in case of danger to fly to a more safe place. In the meantime Mother Teresa succeeded in getting the permission from the Superiors to transfer the rest of the community to the new foundation of Aguascalientes temporarily. On account of the many dangers of travelling, and not being accustomed to it, our Rev. Mother Teresa did not dare come alone with the other sisters, but knowing my courage and my love for her, she felt sure I would come to her assistance.

Although we were not really established in Aguascalientes, nor had we taken possession of the new foundation, only we were permitted to stay there until the revolution was over, in order to establish the community there, I asked permission of the one in charge of the diocese, Rev. Romulo to allow me to go to Queretaro for the purpose of bringing the rest of the sisters. He granted me this permission gladly, provided I would take a companion with me. I succeeded in having one of the novices to accompany me; one who had more courage to undergo whatever hardships we might encounter, and leaving three professed religious, six novices, and four postulants, (fifteen in all), in the care of Divine Providence.

It takes only eight hours to go from Aguascalientes to Queretaro in a regular train, but in this case it took us five days, stopping from city to city, as the trains could only run a short time and then were obliged to stop on account of the lack of fuel, and then we would have to wait for another train, never knowing how long we would have to wait. I always preferred to look for the sisters, for to remain in the depot was very dangerous.

Besides the young novice who accompanied me I had another companion. The priest who had taken charge of the Community as Chaplain, Rev. Father Alonzo, did not allow me to go alone, but accompanied us (both in disguise) as far as Queretaro, and helped me to bring back the sisters.

On our way, as we stopped many times, the priest was longing to say Mass, and we were desirous of receiving holy Communion. Of course this was out of the question because no church was allowed to hold any services, much less to give Holy Communion to the Faithful. This was done only at the risk of the priest being shot on the spot when found. I had provided myself with hosts, small and large, and a small bottle of wine; two candles, an amice, a very light chasuble, alb and corporal, etc., in case that the priest who accompanied us could say Mass in some Church. We stopped at Irepuato, Gto., and we stayed with the Sisters of Charity, (all wearing disguise), and although they knew me, they had difficulty in recognizing me because I was so well disguised. I looked like a very respectable matron, dressed in black, and wearing a long veil over the hat, like a widow. The priest (our Chaplain) was disguised with a frock-coat and a cane, and wore a very small hat which hardly fit him. In the train we always sat separately, so as not to give the impression that we were travelling together, because a lady alone was more free to travel than in the company of a gentleman. So we stopped with those Sisters; I showed the permission I had received from the Rev. Romulo (who was in charge of the diocese during the absence of Bishop Valdespino), and the priest showed his credentials. As we had no place to stay, the nuns were kind enough to allow us to stay for the night. The priest was sent to the Chaplain's house where they took good care of him. I remained with the sisters where we passed the whole night talking of our experiences, and they charged me with all kinds of letters to be brought to different persons, as there was no communication by mail.

The next day, when my companion and I expected to hear Mass there, we were told that the spies were at the door, in order to forbid the celebration of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass. My companion (the priest) having great courage, promised to say Mass in the parish church, and give us holy Communion. We then started out of the convent to look for the parish church.

or any other church which might be nearer. When we reached the church there was only the sacristan and a priest; Rev. Father Alonzo, my companion begged him to permit him to say Mass, but he stated that he had neither hosts nor wine; however, as I was provided with both, the Mass could not be prevented. The doors of the church were closed; no bell could be sounded, and the Mass had to be said in a very low voice, so we stayed near the sanctuary in order to answer the Mass. The priest had already consecrated, and was about to receive Holy Communion, when the acolyte came to him and said that the pastor was in the Sacristy, very angry because they permitted him to say Mass; he said that the day before a priest was shot in the sacristy for having said Mass in that church, so he sent the message "Please consume at once, and do not dare to give Holy Communion to those young ladies."

Rev. Father Alonzo, (far from paying attention to the message which the boy brought), turned to me and said: "Say the 'Confiteor Deo' yourselves in a low voice, and I will give you Holy Communion;" but realizing the danger, I said: "No Father!", and we withdrew from the sanctuary to the door, obliging the priest to consume, and of course, depriving ourselves of Holy Communion.

After the Mass was over I noticed that the priest folded the corporal and put it very nicely in his breast pocket. He then made a sign for me to follow him, and we went to the place where we were staying. "We are in very imminent danger of death, so receive the Viaticum," he said, and then he added in a low tone: "I have the Blessed Sacrament with me." We followed him to the room, and as I always carried with me a couple of candles, I lighted them and stood them on two bottles which I found in the room. Father spread the corporal on the bureau; we said the "Confiteor Deo", and thanks be to God we received our dear Lord.

After that the priest asked me what to do with the corporal. He could not bring it to the Church once more; he had no way of purifying it, and he feared there might be a small particle in, so I said to him: "Give it to me and I shall take the best care of it." I wrapped it in a piece of silk and I put it in the suitcase, but immediately I felt repugnance to keep it there because in the suitcase we were carrying our lunch and our clothes, and I thought it was not the proper place for it. After begging Our

Lord pardon for my boldness, I took the corporal and pressed it to my heart thinking that was the best place to keep it. As we never took off our habits, but wore our secular dress on top of it, I placed the corporal between the habit and the secular dress on my chest. It kept me very recollected the rest of my way, and all the fears disappeared from me, as I thought on how, after having been strengthened with the Holy Communion, and having assisted at the holy sacrifice of the Mass, Our Lord permitted me to carry the linen on which His Sacred Body and Blood had rested that very morning, at the risk of the priest's life. I became so attached to that corporal that I never gave it up in four months, until one of our sisters (Sister Angela) discovered something supernatural, which I will relate just as it happened.

Of course it is not my intention to write my life in these chronicles, but merely an outline of what the Discalced Carmelite Nuns suffered in their "Exodo" from their fatherland to the United States, as will be said later on in regard to the corporal.

After five days of travelling, stopping at every city, (as the Government did not allow the trains to run at night, but only during the daylight for fear of being exploded), and the people came in such multitudes to get the train that many were killed in the terrible crush, that to have a companion was very difficult, as two persons could not keep together, and it was hard enough to save myself without its being necessary to look after my little companion, who was, as I said above, one of the novices. Reverend Father Alonzo, our Chaplain, tried not to lose sight of us. We arrived at the City of Queretaro at six o'clock in the afternoon, finding Mother Teresa and Sister Mary of the Immaculate Conception, the Sub-Prioress, in the little house where I had left them. The rest of the Community were divided amongst the seculars, as we said above, without hope of being re-united again, as by that time the convent had been taken by the revolutionists; the doweries confiscated; and the people feared to keep nuns (even their own relatives) as they were afraid the habit would be discovered in some way. The sisters were obliged to either join completely the social life for reasons of disguise, or not to stay as their guest. Rev. Mother Teresa was very careful, as soon as she discovered that the sisters were in the midst of such

dangers, to remove them from where they were until she had no more places for them, and knowing that we were so peaceful in Aguascalientes, she preferred to join the community there. I have already said that the Superiors were opposed to that, but neither did they give any help. Mother Teresa succeeded in obtaining permission, although temporary, to transfer the entire community to Aguascalientes, where I had previously sent to Rome for permission to transfer the community for good. If necessary to fly from danger we could all go to Cuba.

We re-united then, all the sisters, in that little house, in order to make preparation for our travelling, waiting always to get a chance to get a ticket, because the demand was such that they even stayed over night in the depot trying to get tickets. To send a gentleman in our confidence for the tickets was useless, as they had no regard for men unless they joined the revolution. In those cases a lady could succeed more than a gentleman. God was so good to me that I always succeeded in getting what I wanted—food, clothes, wigs, money, etc., everything I wanted Our Lord gave to me. For this reason Rev. Mother Teresa had such confidence in me.

On the 11th day of September, 1913, I left Queretaro for the second time, bringing with me the rest of the Community, all professed nuns whose names will be given as follows:

- Rev. Mother Teresa of the Immaculate Conception,
- Rev. Mother Bernarda of the Holy Ghost,
- Sr. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, the Sub-Prioress,
- Sr. Mary Carmel of Jesus,
- Sr. Mary of Christ,
- Sr. Teresa of the Holy Face,
- Sr. Mary of Jesus,
- Sr. Agnes of the Holy Family,

A few days after the arrival of Mother Teresa and the other religious to Aguascalientes to the little house which had been donated to us for the foundation, and where we were enjoying great peace and happiness, all of a sudden we were alarmed at the sound in the distance of bombarding of the city. The people began to scream, and run wild through the streets, the dogs barking, the bells and telephones ringing, and within two hours the excitement was terrible, as it was learned that the enemy was only ten miles distant. That was Villa with his

followers, while Carranza had taken the City of Mexico, when Francisco Madero was killed and Pino Suarez. At the same time another enemy named Zapata was attacking the cities wherever Villa entered, so we had one enemy after another. On the very afternoon of the day they entered, the churches were closed; the keys of the churches were gathered by Villa and his accomplices, and all the houses taken for the soldiers. People who had gone in the morning to their business or to hear Mass found on their return that their homes had been taken. In the most elegant and beautiful parlors were kept the horses, and the feed was given to them on the furniture. The dining-rooms were occupied by the bandits, and after eating and drinking they would throw all the dishes and silverware against the walls. They emptied almost all the rich houses. The pianos and some of the most beautiful furniture were thrown through the windows. They said they did not want any more rich people, that the rich were oppressing the poor, and they wanted everyone to be a democrat, and the poor people who did not understand what they meant used to say: "I want to become a democrat." "Where is Mr. Democracy?" They attacked the factories of men and obliged them to turn against the priests by making them believe that the priests were oppressing the poor, and obliging them to pay so much in the church, (this was not true, as in the country of Mexico there is no obligation to pay a determined amount, as each person gives whatever he desires), only the rich and the farmers are obliged to give ten per cent of their money to the church, as the country is so rich in vegetation. However, in less than three days all the factories, trains, street cars, etc., were all on strike. The food went very high, and nobody had provided for this as they had not expected it; so in consequence many people died of starvation. Many families were killed in their own homes because they were practical Catholics and would not join the democrats and would not give up their religion. Others were killed because they were found saying the rosary in their homes, as is the custom in Catholic countries.

For three months the holy Sacrifice of the Mass was not celebrated in any church; the confessionals were burned in the public squares, (this I saw with my own eyes). The Dominican Fathers had most expensive confessionals, and all were covered with petroleum and burned in a couple of hours.

The women were crying aloud in the streets: "Alas! Alas! they have already taken the Church of the Immaculate Conception, and are now taking down the altars to be burned." A few minutes later another group would come saying that the same thing had happened in another church. This was true because many altars were burned in the open air. All the Rectories were destroyed, and many of them could never be re-built because streets were opened in those places. Many of the churches were turned into public libraries, legislative palaces, offices of the Government, while others were burned to the ground, but what was most pitiful was the desecration of the chalices and ciborium. The revolutionists celebrated banquets and after drinking from the chalices they filled them with excrement, and then threw them in the streets, where many women were found picking them up, kissing them, and then bringing them to where the nuns were, in order to take care of them and make reparation. They desecrated the vestments the same as they did in other cities.

The nuns of the Company of Mary (cloistered nuns) were forty-two in number. They had a most beautiful convent, two hundred and fifty years old, and the very day the men entered that city their convent was confiscated, and the nuns driven away within a couple of hours. For this reason the sisters had to be divided immediately amongst the people, as they had not been expecting the revolutionists and they were not ready to disguise. They took their white stiff toques off, but left on the black habits, and covered their heads with veils, and in this way they were seen in the streets. Up to the present time that convent has not been restored, and it is valued over a million dollars. Connected with the convent was a big church used by the sisters as a chapel.

The Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (where I had placed that little girl who entered our convent of Queretaro at the age of six and a half years) were more wise than the others. They disguised themselves as lay teachers, giving their academy the appearance of a private school directed by lay teachers, and they used to invite all those revolutionists to the plays and drills which the children had. This drew the attention of the revolutionists, and some of them placed their own children there to be taught by them. The sisters had the Academy, Boarders, Technical School, Orphanage, and Sunday School, and Sunday

School for working men, and as they were entirely consecrated to the education of the young—the revolutionists did not pay much attention to them, but on the contrary helped them with money in order to support their orphanage. The Directress of that Congregation, Mother Julia Navarrette, had two brother priests, men of great talent and great virtue. Both were persecuted in the time of the Revolution and to avoid being caught disguised themselves as Indians and left the country. They went in that disguise as far as El Paso where they changed for their Roman collars. Rev. Father John Navarrette, and Rev. Francis Navarrette both were in Chicago for some time, and they very quickly learned the English language, and used to preach for the Calced Carmelite Fathers in Chicago, and very soon they became very popular. Rev. John Navarrette is now Bishop of Zonora, Mexico.

Rev. Mother Julia Navarrette is also a woman of great talent, the same as her brothers, and her wisdom in disguising so well at the time of the revolution is the cause of the success she has had since that time, as she has now houses in El Paso, San Antonio, Texas, Laredo, two houses in Mexico and a mother-house and novitiate, and lastly she is doing much good in Zonora where her brother is, and that place is not Catholic.

To come back to our own sisters. The house we had was also confiscated. The command was given by the Ecclesiastical superiors to send home all the novices and postulants who belonged to that City, and to divide the Professed among the people. Here we met with the same difficulty as in Queretaro. The principal difficulty was that the people were afraid to shelter the nuns on account of the cruelty of the soldiers who had killed people because they were merely saying the rosary. What would it be, then, if they discovered that there was a nun there? They would surely kill the nun and the whole family. Our difficulties were such that we had to change the nuns from place to place, and many times three or four times in the same day. This was because the people discovered that there were nuns there and they did not want to keep them any longer. In taking them from one place to another we were not allowed to ride in the street cars because of the strike, nor could we use coaches or machines, but in the terrible heat, I myself had to take them two or four at a time. In order not to call the attention of the

people we did not walk together, but I had to go by myself on one side of the street, and the two other sisters followed me on the other side of the street, and they separated from one another, and not withstanding that our sisters were well disguised, the people would say to them: "May God protect you sister wherever you go."

Seeing these difficulties I arranged with Mother Teresa to rent a very small house which had only two rooms, (we were twelve in number), and all we had to eat was whatever I could get when I went out to beg. Sometimes I returned with some bread and milk, but on other occasions I had to suffer a long delay because of the strikes, and the multitude of panic-stricken people in the streets. At night we had neither electricity, petroleum, nor a piece of candle, so great was our misery. Our sufferings in that City were so great that we at last made up our minds to die, and we took off our disguise uncovering the habits. We then recited the Divine Office aloud at the proper time, we said the rosary and sang; we followed our holy Rule just as if there was no revolution whatever, and many times the shooting was such that we expected any minute to be taken out, perhaps to be burned alive, because of our daring to wear the habit, just like the sixteen Carmelites of Compiègne.

While all our sisters were kept in that house all together, waiting many times to be taken out, I was not in less danger, because I was the "Martha" who had to go out every day and beg from the people whatever they would like to give us in alms to sustain the lives of those poor Carmelites, until the time for their martyrdom would come. In going out into the streets I had the occasion to see what I have said above, regarding the horses being decorated with the sacred vestments. I picked up with my own hands many chalices in the street (of course it was forbidden for anyone to pick them up), but I said I would be the first martyr but I would not leave them thrown in the streets; many times I picked them up in front of the soldiers. On some other occasions when I went to beg bread for the sisters I met in the streets the Catholic ladies of the different societies who were seeking me in order to help them save the ciboriums full of consecrated hosts which had been given to the horses. At the risk of our lives we went to the very places where we knew the ciboriums had been thrown,

and not minding either the horses or the soldiers we saved many hosts from the straw and the feed of the horses. The women were courageous as long as I was with them. We saved many ciboriums and many chalices (I counted over thirty-two), and I have at present the happiness of having one of those small ciboriums which I was enabled to hide and had brought to the sisters for reparation. I also found chalices which had been thrown against the stones and were all bent and crooked, having large dents in them, and my consolation was to see the sisters spend the whole night weeping in front of those sacred vessels, and making reparation for the outrages which our Lord in His Divine Sacrament of Love had suffered for us sinners.

One day as I was going out to get bread for the sisters, I met some of these lady friends who came crying to me for help. They told me that the vestments of the Carmelite Fathers of St. Marcus' Church were to be burned by the revolutionists at two o'clock, in the open square, as they had done with another church, and they wanted to get in some way and save the vestments. I promised them that with the grace of God we would save them. We got ten Catholic men of the most pious and poor, (as the poor were much more pious than the rich), and they were ready to risk their lives in order to save the vestments and sacred vessels of the church. We got a boy and paid him to crawl over the fence of the garden; find a way into the church, and open the doors for us. Once we saw the doors opened we got into the church and hurried to the sacristy. The women knew very well where the vestments were kept, and in less than half an hour we got all the vestments out and handed them to the men who took them to their homes. We saved ciboriums, chalices, candlesticks, and even the mass cards and book-stands, and, not knowing what else to take, we decided to remove the big statue of our Lady of Mt. Carmel which was made of wood, and was very heavy. When we had it half way down we felt that we had not strength enough to finish. We were all alone, as we had forbidden the men to come into the church while we were there: they remained outside carrying things away and watching in case any men in khaki appeared so they could give us a sign to fly to safety. I then told the pious ladies to say a prayer to our Blessed Mother, begging her to allow us to carry her down if what we were doing was pleasing to God.

Immediately we seemed to grow stronger and were able to take the statue down without any difficulty, and we handed it to the men, and one man was sufficient to carry it away. In less than an hour we had emptied the church. This was done between eleven and twelve o'clock in the morning, because in the afternoon at two o'clock the vestments were to be burned in the streets. Exactly at one o'clock the revolutionists came to the church. They found it open and at the same time discovered that somebody had been there and stolen the vestments. They then issued the sentence that if anyone was found saving a vestment or chalice they would be burned alive. Two hours later we took the vestments far out of town, those men carrying them in wagons, and the revolutionists never found the vestments nor who had saved them.

When I returned home and gave an account to Rev. Mother Teresa of what I had done, and when I was expecting that she would give me a penance for my delay, she gave me the obedience, as long as I was out, to save as many chalices and ciboriums as I could, even at the risk of my life.

The next day, my last experience, when I was going out to collect bread for the sisters, I knelt down as usual to receive the blessing of Mother Teresa, and she said: "May God protect you with His grace!" The Catholic women were already there, weeping on account of the most horrible desecration which was going to take place at ten o'clock that morning. The day before, they had carried the statues from all the churches to the public square to be burned (the statues in that country are not made of plaster but all are made of wood). At that very moment a team was passing, carrying a most beautiful statue of the Sacred Heart pleading, the Immaculate Conception, St. Joseph, and St. Anthony, to be burned together with the others. Imagine the feelings of every Catholic heart to see that. They bore the grief of seeing the confessionals burned, but to see the statues profaned in such a manner, it made them weep. The women said that they had been planning the whole night how to save the statues from being burned, and all of them said: "Let us ask Mother Elias what she will advise us to do in the matter." Now to go back to ask Mother Teresa what she thought best was useless, as she would do nothing but cry and grieve. The panic of the people in the street on that occasion

could never be recounted. Everybody was mourning and weeping and the multitudes were around the statues to see if they could prevent them from being burned. I advised the ladies to go to the Governor in his palace and beg him to give a contra-order to what had been given the day before. But they said that they, as women, had no power to move the mind of that man; that though he had been born a Catholic, still he had turned away from the true Faith, and the women begged me to go with them. We decided to go immediately to the palace of the Governor, fearing neither soldiers nor insults, and we finally obtained an interview with the Governor. We told him of our request. He said it was impossible; that the order had been given, the newspapers had all been notified of it, and that the statues had been brought to the square to be burned, and it was now too late to withdraw his word. We insisted and begged him for the love of his own mother to do so. He replied that it was nothing; they were merely going to avoid the fanaticism of the people who used to adore those statues, and those statues meant nothing but a pile of old sticks, consequently it was not worth the while to withdraw his word. Then I spoke and said to him: "My Governor, would you allow me or anyone else to burn the picture of your mother, wife or children? and not feel anything?" And he, placing his hand on his sword, said: "If anyone should attempt that I would kill them in an instant!" Then I said to him: "My Governor, one word more: you were born a Catholic; you do believe in the statues, and you know what they represent; will you please, for the sake of your children, withdraw your order, or if not, burn me with the statues!" He could not stand any more and he said: "Yes, I will." Taking out his watch, he said, "But it is now twenty minutes to ten and at ten o'clock the statues will be burned." "How can you get there to bring my orders? You will be too late." Then I said: "My Governor, if you wish you could do so; one word of yours everybody will obey." And he said, "All right, all right!" And sitting down he wrote the order to prevent the burning of the statues. Then he read it to us, and calling his own son, he said: "Gerald, take this to the square and prevent the order." We then thanked him very kindly and withdrew. He was such a gentleman that he accompanied us as far as the steps, and right there shook hands with us, saying that if at any time we were

in need of help he was ready to oblige us. Who could believe the designs of God, that the interview which I had with this gentleman, who was in the revolution more from necessity than from his own fault, was later on the salvation of the whole Community, as I will relate in the proper place.

Things grew worse day by day. The persecution of the religious increased to such an extent that no safe place could be found for them to hide in, as the soldiers used to attack no longer through the doors, but through the roofs, and the danger existed more during the nights than during the days. Twenty-two nights I passed, sitting at the door, guarding the sisters and praying to God: "Do not let these men touch these Thy virgins."

After having passed the whole night watching, the next day I had to go out to beg, in order not to let them die of starvation. God alone knows what I suffered during those three months when I was obliged to beg daily a piece of bread for my poor sisters. Some days on going to the houses where I usually received help, a cool answer was given to me: "Sister, we have nothing to give you today." On going to other places instead of receiving help, I would hear: "For heaven's sakes, here comes that pest. We have nothing to give our children, and we have to support these lazy people!" Others would menace me by saying: "But Sister, why do you insist on living all together? You are breaking the law of the Constitutionalists. Why don't you dissolve that conventicle and marry, and do something for the nation?" This was all I heard, and after walking miles and miles in the burning heat of the sun, with an empty stomach and a dizzy head from the lack of sleep, I leave it to the reader to imagine my feelings.

When our sufferings were at their height, and we thought we had drunk the chalice to its dregs, deprived of the supernatural strength of the Sacraments (as only occasionally we could hear Mass and receive Holy Communion), and without any human consolation, having lost our convent of Queretaro and the little house in Aguascalientes where we were: exhausted by the lack of food and rest, in a constant state of anxiety, expecting any minute to see the soldiers rush in, the supreme sacrifice was waiting for us. A law was given that the Superioress of any institution should present herself to the court. Immediately the thought came to our minds that we would be sent out to beg an

enormous amount of money as they did with the priests, and if not enough was collected someone would have to be the victim, and not knowing what kind of death would be our reward. Imagine the anxiety of all our sisters to see me going out to the court, not knowing whether they would ever see me again or not.

We presented ourselves before the Governor at ten o'clock that morning. The Superior of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Rev. Mother Julia Navarrette was out of town and in her place her Assistant, Rev. Mother Virginia Fisher presented herself. The Prioress of the Sisters of the Company of Mary, Rev. Mother Silvia Mercier, and the Superior of the Servants of Mary, Rev. Mother Joanna Suarez, and the Prioress of the Discalced Carmelites (of the new foundation, Aguascalientes) Rev. Mother M. Elias Thierry.

No one was allowed to accompany us to the Court. We were obliged to wear the distinctive and complete habit of our different institutions, which we represented. (The reason for this was that the people had such great respect for the religious and Priests that always in these dangers of being retained in prison or sentenced to death, they would fly to their rescue).

We were immediately interrogated, under oath, as to our nationality, the place of birth, where our convents were situated, the number of sisters, the amount of money which each one of them had as a dowry, and where the nuns were at the present time, and whether we were keeping the laws given by the Constitutionals, namely, not to have any conventicle by being together, not to wear any habits, not to have any prayers in common, and not to have any property belonging to the Institution. Only a miracle could save us from death after hearing all these questions, but what saved us was that not one of the four were Mexicans, Mother Virginia Fisher was German, Mother Silvia Mercier was French, and could speak but very little Spanish, Mother Joanna Suarez was Spanish, and Mother Elias Thierry was French. They could not sentence any of us to death in case of finding us deficient in the laws given by the Revolutionists, and existing at the same time in the Constitutions given by the President "Benito Juarez", who shot the Emperor Maximiliano, together with Mejia and Miramom, about seventy-five years ago.

The first one to be interrogated was Rev. Mother Virginia Fisher, who stated that her Institution was entirely dedicated

to the benefit of the country, the poor, the orphans, the sick and the unlearned; that they had no more property than the academy and whatever revenue would come from the pupils, so the judge said that she could continue her work, provided that instead of the Academy of the Immaculate Conception it would be called: "Academy of Benito Juarez".

The next one to be questioned was Rev. Mother Joanna Suarez, of Spanish nationality, and she stated that her institution was dedicated to heal the suffering of the poor, and to attend to the sick, etc., and to bind the wounds of the dying soldiers. She stated that they had no property but merely a rented house where her four companions were staying. She was exiled with her companions to Spain, and ordered to leave within twenty-four hours.

The third one was Rev. Mother Silvia Mercier, of French Nationality, Prioress of the Convent of the Servants of Mary, semi-cloistered nuns, whose doweries had already been confiscated, and also their large convent and academy. Their work was teaching, their number of sisters twenty-seven, and two hundred and fifty pupils. The judge said that as their big convent and academy now belonged to the Government and not to them, and as they were dedicated to teach the rich, there was no more work for them to do, as there would be no more rich people to teach (as everyone was to be a democrat). As they were breaking the law by being together their sentence was to leave the city within twenty-four hours.

Now my time came. There was no excuse left for us. During the time the judge was interrogating the other nuns I was praying to the Little Flower of Jesus to save us as we were in such imminent danger, and I did not know what to answer. I could not hide the nuns because the answers were under oath. When the judge questioned me he looked at me very steadily and said: "Madame, I think I met you before?" "My General," I said, "it is only two weeks since I came to this very place accompanied by six other ladies to beg your illustrious person to withdraw the order which had been given to burn the statues in the public square, and you so kindly granted it to me." "But you did not wear this garb." "No sir, I was in disguise." "And why are you wearing this dress once more?" "At your command, to present ourselves in our talar dress", I answered. "What Order

do you represent?" "The Cloistered Discalced Carmelite Nuns." "Of what nationality are you?" "French," I answered. "How old are you?" "Thirty-five." "Where was your convent situated?" "Queretaro." "Where are you at the present time?" "Aguas-calientes". "How many sisters have you under your charge?" "Twelve professed nuns." "How much money of doweries have you?" "Not one penny." "What did you do with it?" "It has been confiscated." "And your convent?" "Also." "Do the Sisters keep the law of not wearing any habits?" "Yes, sir, apparently." "What do you mean by 'apparently'?" "I mean that we wear the habit inside and a secular dress on top." He roared laughing, and said: "Are you not warm and uncomfortable?" "Very much sir." "How much money have you at the present time?" "Not one penny to buy bread, neither for myself nor for my companions." "What do you eat then?" "I come out every day to beg." "And how much do you get?" "Insults for the love of God and my companions." "Where are you living at the present time?" "On 27 Mercy St." "And what do you and your companions intend to do, to continue this life of slavery? Why don't you and your companions marry?" "Because we have professed the contrary." "But of what benefit will you be to the country?" "To pray and sacrifice ourselves for the salvation of souls." "Do you think you will save me?" "Yes, sir," I answered, "if you co-operate with the Grace of God." It seemed that a certain remorse of conscience took possession of his mind because he turned to the window and looked out at what was going on. Not knowing how to continue his questions any more he said, "Well do you really think that I will be saved?" "Yes, sir, if you believe." "Believe! In what?" "In God, and keep His commands," I answered. "My goodness, you speak Spanish fluently," said he, changing this unpleasant subject.

From the moment I stepped into the court all fears had disappeared from me. I knew that my Sisters were praying for me, and were in a terrible agony, awaiting the news of my sentence, as some ladies who had accompanied us as far as the door had gone back and forth to see how the Sisters were, and to bring them some food, and they had told them that I was still in the court.

Then the judge said to me that on account of being together, breaking the law of the Constitutionals, my sentence was to

be exiled together with the other Carmelites, and that we were to leave the country within twenty-four hours. Although I heard the sentence of being exiled with great happiness, I said to the judge, "My General, we are sixteen Carmelites in all. I have not one penny to buy bread today. How can we leave the country in twenty-four hours?" The thought came to me that as this judge was the very man, who, two weeks ago, shook hands with me and promised to help us whenever we should be in need of any favor from him, and trusting first in God, and then in the man's promise, I dared to beg him: "Would you kindly allow us to stay in the city at least for a couple of months while we get the necessary money to leave the country?" The man, remembering his promise, answered kindly: "Where can you get the money?" "From the Divine Providence," I replied, "as I have no one to whom to turn my eyes." "From the Divine Providence," he said. "Have you any money hidden some place?" "No," I said, "I have not one penny, but I have to do something." "Have you any chalices or jewelry which you expect to sell?" "No sir, I have nothing but what I have on." "And then what will you do?" "Well, I do not know." "Allright," he said, "stay, and I promise you that nobody will molest you. If you cannot get the necessary money come back to me and I will give you the necessary amount or passes for you to leave."

This man, as well as hundreds of others, was not a free mason, nor a wicked man. He had compassion for the suffering, and great respect for women. He was in the revolution like many others who, having lost their property and all they possessed, were obliged through necessity to throw themselves into the revolution, as there was no other means of support.

At two o'clock we left the court, after having passed four hours of untold agony. The streets outside of the court were crowded with people so that it was almost impossible to pass, and the policemen who were keeping order had to break the way for us, and accompanied us all our way through.

Who can imagine the agony of our Sisters who were in their hiding place, and what was their thanksgiving to God when they saw me coming back. Every one was anxious to hear what had happened. After they had heard the whole interrogation, and our sentence to leave the country, they all ran to me, saying they were ready to make the sacrifice of leaving their Mother-

country, together with those most dear to their hearts, in order to fulfill the words of the Gospel: "He who leaves Father and Mother and lands for my sake—, etc."

My heart was greatly consoled to see how ready they were to make the sacrifice, and our hearts were so united that my wish was for them a command.

Meantime we were totally deprived of all comforts.

Seeing conditions so bad, and little chance of improving, I succeeded in obtaining money from the families of some of the nuns, to take some of them as far as Cuba. But what could be done with the rest? At last a refuge was found. A house behind a large convent school was completely surrounded by a high wall, and had no entrance left open but a little opening on the ground about a foot and a half square through which we all could crawl to hear Mass, and pass the necessary food. Here we remained for two months, in hourly danger of our lives as well as that of the Sisters who safeguarded us. These Sisters were in less danger as they were teaching school, disguised as lay teachers. Our Reverend Mother Teresa preferred to save first the youngest sisters by sending them together with me to Cuba and for the rest to wait until Divine Providence would provide. So on the 24th of October 1914, we left the country of Mexico, not knowing whether we would ever return. The farewell was the most painful that has ever been witnessed in the chronics of the Order. It was not a joyous farewell as when going to a new foundation; obedience sends you there and more or less you will be received with open arms wherever the daughters of St. Teresa go, but in this case our farewell was a very sad one. Our families were there weeping as for our last adieu, for no matter how much we tried to conceal the hour of our departure they found it out and were waiting at the depot, and at the same time, as we were in disguise, they did not want to call the attention of the passengers. There was no security in travelling because of the exploding of the trains, the poisoning of the water, and refusing to stop in cities where passengers could get supplied with food. I was only 35 years of age with very little experience in travelling and my companions were still younger, because all were novices and young sisters. There was no certainty in the trains, but notice was given that the train was to start at nine o'clock in the evening, so we left our dear

Mother Teresa and all our other companions in that seclusion and went to the depot, at about eight o'clock in the evening, and to increase our sufferings the train did not come until twenty-six hours later. All this time we had to be seated in the depot, exposed to the greatest dangers, because the soldiers could not see a pretty young lady without taking her by force. Not that I was pretty, but my companions were. At about eleven o'clock the next night, after having been twenty-seven hours in the depot, the announcement of the train was made by the sound of a cannon, and the people came in such terrible crowds to take the train that our lives were in danger, and it was impossible to get into the train although the tickets were bought. We had to beg the man in the express car to please let us have a little room in there. When he saw the young faces, despite our disguise, he immediately realized we were nuns, and in the kindness of his heart he let us get in the express car. But how to travel for three days and three nights until we could reach the City of Mexico and change trains to Vera Cruz, in order to get the steamer? How to keep all the Sisters together, for we were not the only ones who had begged to enter the express car; there were many others who begged for the same thing. The sisters were divided on the top of the packages, and one of them got to the highest place as the conductor accommodated her on a large pile of sheep skins, but all at once the skins toppled over and she fell and for awhile could not be found. As soon as there was room in the train the conductor kindly moved us there for better accommodation, but for us it was a new danger. A company of comics, young men, got up there and they played and sang the most profane songs just before us, because they realized we were nuns. The danger of losing the sisters every minute existed in my heart. They began to put out the lights and to leave only one lamp of petroleum, in order to put it out at any time they wanted to. It was then I began to realize the great danger in which we had placed ourselves, but thanks be to God I had in my pocket a blessed candle and matches, so I lit my candle with great dissimulation as if to help those people who were trying to fix the petroleum lamp, but my intention was to keep watch on the Sisters. When they saw they could not carry out their intentions they lit the rest of the lamps, and thus we arrived at the city of Mexico.

The multitude at the depot was such that it was almost impossible to keep two persons together, but with the grace of God, and almost a miracle, the sisters followed me as I told them, and we divided into two groups as we had to cross the city in carriages in order to reach the other depot. Here we met with new dangers, new sufferings, which it would be impossible to describe. At eleven o'clock in the same evening we were taking the train for Vera Cruz. On the way we suffered a train-wreck; the view, however, was beautiful, and we could praise the Lord in His works and His omnipotence, and forget our sufferings a little. The mountains, the tunnels, the vegetation, all spoke to us of God, but still we could not forget those we had left behind, hidden in that poor little abode, where they had to crawl through a little opening in the ground in order to hear Mass.

We reached Vera Cruz and immediately we made arrangements to take the steamer, and two days later we arrived in Cuba—that is, on the 1st of November, in the afternoon, when the bells were tolling for the poor souls. We could hardly recognize ourselves on account of the disguise. Some were dressed in white, some in blue and some in black, but still we could not deny that under the disguise we were nuns, and many of the people addressed us with the title “Mother” and “Sister”, and “Can I be of any help to you Sisters?” “Can I carry your bag Mother?” etc. The name of the steamer was “Monserrat”; naturally it was Catholic with all its crew, and had a Chaplain, so we had Mass and Holy Communion every day, although we had to keep seated all the time on account of the dizziness. In the steamer we wore our Carmelite habits. As soon as we had our berths we took off the disguise, as we wore our habits under them, and we chanted the Divine Office, recited the rosary and sang hymns in thanksgiving to God and to our Blessed Mother. As there were forty other nuns from different congregations on board, they joined us with great pleasure, and even the crew liked to gather near at the time of the rosary, and to listen to our hymns.

At last we reached Cuba, and for protection we had to put on the disguise once more before reaching the convent, as there were hundreds of nuns and priests in the streets, and the Government had begun to show displeasure at so many priests and nuns arriving in Cuba. At the port our kind Sisters had sent a machine for us, and two priests and a few ladies in machines

to conduct us to the monastery. When we reached the monastery of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns, where we were going to remain for awhile, we knelt at the regular door and, with such tears, kissed the enclosure, so precious to our hearts. What embraces of the Sisters and tears from everyone, especially the older Sisters, as they took us to the Chapel where we sang the Te Deum in thanksgiving for our voyage. Our hearts were happy as we were at last in safety, but always thinking of the sadness of our hidden Sisters. The kindness of the Mother Prioress and the other nuns in Cuba made us forget somewhat our past sufferings.

The next day we were called to the parlor to meet Msgr. Kelly, the President of the Extension Society of the United States, and Rt. Rev. Archbishop Blank of New Orleans, La., who were there to console the Mexican people, especially the priests and religious. I was obliged to give an account of the revolution in Mexico, as very little was known in the United States, and everything I said was taken down, and afterwards I was asked if I was willing to have it published. I could not refuse on account of the kindness of both prelates, and my account will be found somewhat in the "Red and Yellow Book" which Msgr. Kelly published in 1914. Then Msgr. Kelly as well as Archbishop Blank questioned me why I did not save all the Sisters. Why part remained hidden amidst such sufferings? My answer was, "Your Grace, I had only enough money to save six of us." Although a good many thousands had been spent on this trip, the depreciation of the money was such that a thousand pesos was exchanged for four dollars. The kind prelates, full of compassion, promised to give me the necessary help in order to save our other Sisters. But how to bring them to Cuba? After all these sufferings and the long travelling, to start over again, not knowing whether they could be reached or not? Who could go after them? Who would expose their life in order to save them, always in doubt as to whether they could be reached? God then filled me with courage and I answered intrepidly: "Yes, Monsignor, I will go back for them," and they congratulated me upon my courage. As we were already in papal enclosure I could not leave the convent without the consent of the Holy See, but in this case the Bishop Strada of Havana approved my going, and sent me his blessing.

I started out on November 21st, after having been twenty

days in the monastery, as the Mother Prioress kindly obliged me to rest. From Cuba to the frontier of Mexico I had no companion, but was all alone wearing disguise for prudence sake, as it would give disedification to see one Carmelite nun travelling alone. In Laredo, Texas, I waited for a few days in order to get a companion, as I would not dare to travel into the country alone. One who had been a novice in our Community, and on account of the revolution had been sent home, now came to my assistance. Not knowing what was in store for us we travelled alone three days and three nights without misfortune. Then, within one day's journey of our goal I was taken prisoner, together with my companion, because they realized I was a nun, despite my disguise. Imagine our sorrow and affliction. After months of weariness and watching, after losing hope of reconstructing the Community and then having the means at hand to save our dear Sisters, for whose safety I so justly feared, now to have all hopes dashed from my hand within one day's journey from the goal.

Thrown into prison with my companion, with the money hidden on my person that was necessary to save the Sisters, if I lost it, who could again give me the necessary means? How could I communicate with Msg. Kelly and Archbishop Blank when there was no mail? I was called out in the middle of the night to give an account of where my other Sisters were hidden, and how much money and precious vessels we had to give to them. As I was responsible for their lives and for the money that was confided to me for their rescue, it was impossible for me to give such information. They did not guess that I had the money with me, otherwise they would have torn me to pieces. Three days and three nights we were in the basement of that prison, dark, without air, and about twelve inches of water covering the floor, and a few sticks and stones, where at times we could rest but one foot, otherwise we would have to stay always in the cold water. Three times we were called out of our prison and questioned. Questions yielded to threats and threats to worse, and we had no hope to get out of that place. Even though I were to tell where the Sisters were and to give them all the money, my life was in danger, as I saw in many other cases. After being two days in prison, two Sisters of St. Joseph who were there were called out and questioned in the

same manner and, as they refused to tell where the sacred vessels were, they were shot. In the same place there were Priests and Religious of many other Congregations as prisoners. On the third day they took us out of prison about ten o'clock in the evening, and interrogated us with the same questions and menaced us with death if we refused to tell, but I courageously said: "Put me to death if you wish, I will never reveal where the Sisters are." Then two hours were given us in which to make up our minds. As they were under the impression that the cloistered convents had plenty of money and more than the teaching orders, they preferred to get from us the money rather than to take our lives. When we were back in our prison, fearing approximate death, and what is worse to be burned alive, which I feared so much, and begging our Lord not to forsake us at the last minute, but offering my life in union with that of Our Lord in order to save at least a handful of souls, and especially those of my executioners, I knelt down in the water in our cell, and said to my companion: "Something great we must offer to Our Lord, something which will cost us very much, in order to be released from this prison." But she would give me no answer, no consolation, no light, no hope, but in a terrible fright just exclaimed: "Oh Mother! I despair." I tried to console her, encouraged her to die if that was the adorable will of God. The thought came to my mind to make a claim on our sweet "Little Flower" and make a promise to her to spread her devotion and extend the Order by means of a foundation of a Mother House of the Third Order Carmelite Sisters in the United States. This was a hard promise to make as naturally I hated foundations, as they always bring such hardships and difficulties, and even more so for the Third Order. Just as our Holy Mother St. Teresa had the greatest difficulties with those of her own Community, when she began the great work of the Reform of our Order, so I realized the difficulties I would have with my own Community—but what else could I offer? What better promise could I make to the Little Flower than that of spreading her devotion by such a means, as she said in her life that she would like to be a missionary in order to save souls. So as I did not get an answer from my companion, in the bottom of my heart I made a solemn vow of founding a Mother House of the Third Order as soon as we should be released and our sisters were in safety.

I was scarcely finished making my promise when we were dragged out of our cell, and without a word our hands were tied behind our backs, and they stood us up in the same spot where the two Sisters of St. Joseph were shot the day before. They said to us: "This is your last chance, tell us how many Sisters have you and where are they? Where is the money? Where have you hidden the chalices?" I was so frightened I could only answer "Never!" as I could utter nothing else. Then they said: "How do you want to die? Standing or kneeling?" "Kneeling," I said with a very cool voice. We immediately knelt, awaiting God's most holy will, but with my hopes still centered in Little Therese and interiorly appealing to her in that dreadful moment. I said with all my heart, "Little Therese save me." Opposite there were ranged up in five ranks a hundred men with muskets aiming at us. Truly it was our last chance, but of what value would life be bought at the cost of honor and the sacrifice of other precious lives! There could be no choice in such a case for a Carmelite! My only reply was: "You may shoot me if you wish, I shall be only too happy to die, but to tell you where the Sisters are—Never!" Then the order was given to fire, and we both fell unconscious to the ground. Two hours after, my companion recovered from the fright and called me in a very loud voice and said, "Mother where are we? Oh Mother I am tied. Oh Mother look at the sky." The first thing I saw after recovering from my fright was the skies. The blue skies, the moon shining and the night very peaceful and serene. Then she said, "Mother if you try to loose me with your teeth I think I could loose you." When we were thus talking a man came to find out whether we were half dead in order to shoot us for good, as they used to shoot those who were in agony. When the man realized that we were quite alive he said to me, "Oh, Madame, I am sorry for you, how I wish I could deliver you from this prison, but you must be terribly wounded and you cannot walk, otherwise I would open the door for you." "If you really mean it," I said, "Our Blessed Lady of Guadalupe will reward you, and God will give us the strength to walk." Then he showed us a secret door in order to get out, and a few minutes after we were out in the darkness of the night, although the moon was visible at times, which lighted our way. Finding ourselves alone and the country around strange, and not knowing whither to

turn, I renewed my vow to the Little Flower and begged her to guide us to the station, as we were but a few miles from the City of Mexico. In the extreme darkness we distinguished a person approaching us in a very quiet manner. He was disguised as an Indian but was in reality a Priest. He questioned me: "Are you a Religious?" Imagine our predicament. We did not know whether he was a spy or was one of those charitable souls who expose their lives in order to save the prisoners. I could see, however, in his face the sincerity of his question, and I said, "Yes we are, we are Carmelites." He replied "Where do you go?" I answered, "To the City of Mexico, but I do not know how to find the way." Then he answered, "I have two horses if you know how to ride." I answered, "No I never did in my life, and I am afraid of a horse." He then pointed to the two horses which were tied to a tree, and he encouraged me to mount. He knelt on one knee and said to me, "Put your foot on my knee and then spring up," which I did. "Now leave the reins loose, as the horse is trained. Do not look at the ground or you will get dizzy. Just look at the sky." These words "do not look at the earth, look at the sky" have been my spiritual consolation ever since. My companion was accustomed to ride, and when she found herself on horseback she was perfectly safe, but I was always afraid I was going to fall. Once we reached the railway station the horses could return by themselves. It took me a long time to find the money I had hidden on my person, but we finally got our tickets and in a few hours we reached the City of Mexico. As it was four o'clock in the morning when we reached the city, and constantly exposed to danger, we preferred to go to an English hotel as they were safe from the revolutionists. Here we rested half of the day, and to our surprise, when we changed our clothes, we found we had not been wounded. Whether the order given to the soldiers at the prison had been given to fire above our heads, or whether the bullets did us no harm, and thus we were miraculously preserved, we could not tell. When we realized such a great miracle we prostrated ourselves upon the ground, thanking God for having preserved our lives in order to do His Divine Will, and we made a promise to walk barefoot to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe which was twelve miles distant from the City of Mexico. We started immediately in our bare feet

and five hours later we reached the basilica, into which we entered on our knees from the door to thank the Blessed Mother for the miracle of having preserved our lives. From that time on we felt such courage to undergo any trial in order to save our sisters. We felt the supernatural help so that it was as though we were not the ones who were acting. One day later we reached the place where the sisters were hidden. Here we had the happiness of hearing Mass and receiving Holy Communion. We made our confession in the basement of the church, as the sacraments were strictly forbidden. We never tired of thanking our Blessed Mother for our safe deliverance from prison so much the more when we remembered that in the same prison there were sixty other nuns confined, with no means of escape, and we had even stood in the very foot-prints of the two who had been shot, and none escaped but the two Carmelites.

A week later, December 26th, we left Mexico going to Cuba with the intention of making a translation of the Community to that Island, as we had permission of the Holy See. We arrived in Cuba on January 8, 1915, and until we could make the necessary arrangements for the transfer of the Community we remained with our Discalced Carmelite sisters in St. Teresa's Monastery, Cuba. Here we met with such great charity and loving kindness that they made us forget all our sufferings and ill treatment. However, we could not remain there forever, so we had to manage some way. We intended to have another house in Cuba, but the Bishop would not allow us to have two monasteries in the same City. Then we decided to go to Matanzas City on the same Island of Cuba, where Bishop Curran, an American Bishop, accepted the foundation and was very kind to us, but unfortunately he had just resigned his episcopate on account of ill health, and he returned to the United States. Before leaving his Lordship gave me letters of recommendation for whatever we decided to do.

It was impossible to establish the Community in Matanzas, Cuba, owing to the fact that they required us to bring with us \$100,000.00 with which to build a monastery, and as we had lost all our doweries and possessions, and spent the rest in escaping from Mexico, it was impossible to bring this amount with us. Then we placed our hope in Puerto Rico and thought perhaps we could establish our monastery there, but we met

with the same difficulty, as money was necessary for everything. Then having in mind the kindness of Msgr. Kelly, the President of the Extension Society, and Archbishop Blank of New Orleans, both of whom had promised to find us a house in the United States in case we could not succeed in Cuba, we decided to return to New Orleans, and to stay in the convent of our sisters, the Discalced Carmelites, where there were a good many sufferings reserved for us. Here we did not meet with the same kindness as in Cuba. Our sisters had not yet learned to speak English, and even though they had the best of will to learn the English language, still it was very hard for them not to understand a word. Our Carmelite Nuns did not have enough room inside the enclosure to accommodate us, so eight of our sisters remained with the outside sisters all in one room, and the other eight in the Academy with the Sisters of St. Joseph. The heat of New Orleans was so intense that it surpassed five times the heat of the hot Country of Mexico, and all our sisters were taken with Malaria fever. There were ten sisters in bed at the same time. Although His Grace the Archbishop of New Orleans received the Community very kindly he could not allow us to have another Monastery in the same City, but helped us very much with his recommendations to get a place. We passed six months in New Orleans in that terrible heat when on September 30th a terrible cyclone destroyed most of the City. The Sisters of St. Joseph who were so kindly sheltering our sisters suffered great damages during the cyclone. The very room which they had allowed our sisters to occupy had the roof blown off, and their Academy was terribly destroyed. We then had to beg dear Mother Alberta, the Mother Prioress of the Carmel of New Orleans where the eight of our sisters were staying to give the rest of us shelter as we had no place to stay. To the consideration of the reader we leave how much we had to suffer. The little house in which the out-sisters lived was built for three persons, and in addition to those three sisters we were sixteen in number. We had only one room where we used to stay the greater part of the day sewing and embroidering for our New Orleans' sacristy, as we had to repay in some way the charity we were receiving. We used to recite our Divine Office in the Outside Choir, as their own choir was for twenty sisters and they could not accommodate sixteen more. Only six sisters could

be accommodated in the refectory, and the rest had to take their meals with the out-sisters, which of course was a cause of continual annoyance to the New Orleans Community. The Reverend Mother Prioress wanted by all means to divide our Community, sending some of us to St. Louis Carmel, four to the Boston Carmel, four to the Carmel in Philadelphia, four to the Carmel in Wheeling and the rest to Canada. Mother Teresa, who was the Prioress of our Community, knew not a word of English, and I had to translate all this to her, but her only answer was, "I will not divide the Community. If we go to a hill together I do not mind but I shall not divide the Community." What could I answer the next morning after breakfast, which was the usual hour in which I was called by the Rev. Mother Prioress to give an account of what Mother Teresa's decision was, as I was the interpreter? How could I repeat the words "I shall not divide the Community? We will be together wherever we go." Then I would receive my admonition that we should be more detached from one another and there was nothing else to do but to help the different Carmels, etc. I would go back once more to Mother Teresa, my Prioress, and tell her the decision of Mother Alberta, only to receive the same answer as above "I shall not divide the Community. Where is the Little Flower? Where is our Holy Mother St. Teresa? Are we forsaken by God? You tell Rev. Mother I will not divide the Community." Then all our sisters were taken with a terrible home-sickness, and especially Rev. Mother Teresa. Amidst all this nothing could disturb the peace of my soul, as I had great faith in Little Thérèse, but of course before reaching our "Thabor" we had to pass through our "Calvary".

Full six months were passed in these sufferings and I was having my sermons on both sides every day. At last our Rev. Mother Prioress Teresa Maria received a letter from the Rev. Mother Prioress of the Carmel of St. Louis, Mo., saying that with great pleasure they could arrange a foundation for us in the diocese of Grand Rapids, Michigan, with the Rt. Rev. Bishop Joseph Richter of that diocese. Together with her letter came a letter from our dear Bishop Richter, expressing a great desire of having a Carmelite Monastery in his diocese. He said he had been longing for twenty-four years to have a Monastery of Carmelite Nuns in his diocese. To new graces new trials were

added. The Bishop wanted only six sisters, and our Mother Teresa repeated her same decision: "I will not divide the Community." Where was the other ten to go? As I was the only one who could speak a little English (my knowledge of English was such a little that once when I was lost in New Orleans I could not find the proper words to say "I have lost my way") who would be their interpreter then if I had to go to the foundation in Grand Rapids? Well, my only recourse was prayer. "Little Thérèse, please finish your work. Are you going to forsake us in the middle of the way? Please give our sisters a little knowledge of English so they will get rid of this loneliness. Will you work in the mind of the Bishop to receive the whole Community instead of only six? Little Thérèse, please come to my help," and as if I had an answer within my soul I did not suffer as much as the others, but left it all to her.

On November 2nd, 1915, our Rev. Mother Teresa commanded me in virtue of holy obedience to go to Grand Rapids, having as companion Rev. Mother Carmel, to speak with his Lordship and arrange the translation of the whole Community. The first words of our dear Bishop Richter were: "I want only six for my foundation, the rest can make another foundation in the United States." Now how could I write to our Rev. Mother Teresa and tell her that Bishop wanted only six of our sisters, and that the rest could make different foundations in the United States, when she had commanded me in virtue of holy obedience to arrange with Bishop Richter the translation of the whole Community? Well, never mind, once more I left it to the Little Flower as she could get me out of this conflict (if only she would). There was no way to change the mind of the Bishop, as he said he wanted some vocations from his own diocese, and he was right. So I sent word to Mother Teresa to send four more of our sisters, promising that I would work to have arrangements made for another foundation in some other City, as soon as I had these few settled. Well the whole answer was—that *all of them came*. As I had to meet them in Chicago (for they could not speak a word of English) what was my surprise when I saw in the train not four Carmelites, but twelve, all our own dear sisters. Now my next anguish. I could not go against the commands of my Superior, Mother Teresa, and I could not go against the will of Bishop Richter either. What could I do

with the other twelve? If I had been the Superior I would have given a command in holy obedience and divide them elsewhere, but I was nothing but the poor interpreter. How to convince Mother Teresa to leave them in Chicago, and to have only four come? Once more I had recourse to prayer. "Little Flower where are you? What can I do with these your sisters? Please change the mind of Bishop Richter." After having prayed thus I felt a great relief, although I could not dare to trespass the limits of obedience. As I had not enough money to bring all the sisters to Grand Rapids I begged Mother to divide them in two convents—with the Mercy Sisters and in the Loretto Academy. Meantime I had the necessary passes for the rest, taking with me of course Mother Teresa and four of the other sisters. So we arrived six in all to Grand Rapids. As our dear Bishop Richter knew we were sixteen in all, his first question was "Where are the others?" I said "Rev. Bishop, you gave me obedience that you wanted only six so the others remained divided in two Communities in Chicago until Our Lord will see what we will do with them." When Mother Teresa realized the kindness of Bishop, and as there was no house to shelter them right away, Mother gave her consent to divide them up temporally among the Communities in Grand Rapids, until such time as we could find a house. Four sisters stayed with the Dominican Sisters, four with the Good Shepherd Sisters, four with the Notre Dame Sisters, and the other four with the Little Sisters of the Poor. Now Mother Teresa and I faced the problem of obtaining a house. Already we were having severe winter weather, although it was just the month of November, and most of the houses for rent were very small, too small to begin a Monastery, as usually people do not move in that time of the year. Finally Our Lord took compassion on us, and after much weariness in seeking a house, we found one at 646 Lafayette Ave., where on February 2nd we were all reunited, and our Honored Prelate Bishop Richter said the first Mass, and left the Blessed Sacrament to us, which was a great consolation to us. Thus we took possession of our foundation at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Community being established, our Prelate held the first elections on February 14th, 1916. Although Bishop wanted me to take the office of Prioress, on account of the little knowledge

of English I possessed, I begged him for the love of God to let me rest for a while, as my health was very poor, the result of so much suffering during the revolution. Then Rev. Mother Carmel of Jesus was elected Prioress, Rev. Mother Margaret as Sub-Prioress, Rev. Mother Teresa First Clavarian, Rev. Mother Bernarda Second Clavarian, and I could not escape from being at least Third Clavarian and Mistress of Novices. Anyway, my mission was ended as the sisters were saved, and I now had another work to begin, for the love of God.

I had an interview with our Prelate, Rt. Rev. Bishop Richter, and told him of my vow, made while in prison, of establishing a Mother House of the Third Order Sisters in the United States. As a Religious I could not add another vow to the three vows of the Religious life, so in order to fulfill this vow I had to have his Lordship's approbation. After hearing my account of the revolution, and my escape from the prison through the intercession of the Little Flower of Jesus, I begged his Lordship to give me his opinion in this regard, or to release me from it. His Lordship graciously said to me: "My Child, I see that a foundation of the Third Order in the United States would be for the greater glory of God and the extension of the Order, as the Order of Carmel is very little known in the United States, and far from dispensing you from such a vow I oblige you to fulfill it, with the condition of adding to that vow another—that of making four more houses of the Second Order of Carmel in the United States. As you have so many nuns and there will be many applicants to apply, God will provide, and when you least expect the occasions will present themselves, and after that you can begin to work for the Third Order Mother House. I give you my word to help you as much as I can, if not in this life then in the next, but never, my child, give up the idea of founding a mother house of the Third Order Sisters no matter what difficulties and contradictions you meet with, because the spirit of prayer in which the Order of Carmel is founded is very much needed amongst our teaching sisters."

The reason why I made this vow of establishing a mother house of the Third Order in the United States was because I wanted to offer to the Little Flower something which would cost me very much, and at that time there was nothing which would cost me so much as to establish the Mother House of

the Third Order, because I had already started one in Queretaro, Mexico, and it had brought me a multitude of hardships and contradictions. Owing to my selfishness I hated new foundations with all their burdensome details. When I explained all this to dear Bishop Richter, and his Lordship realized the aversion I felt for new foundations, he simply added to what is said above. "Far from dispensing you from such a vow, I oblige you to fulfill it with the addition of another vow to make first four more houses of the Second Order of Carmelites in the United States, and then the Third Order. (As the United States meant "land of liberty" to me, that is why I had promised the Little Flower to make the foundation in the United States. This vow may be fulfilled, as I have consulted with my directors, in any other free country, if in the United States I do not have the opportunity of fulfilling this vow).

The little house at 646 Lafayette St. in which we started the foundation of Grand Rapids was so small that we had to use one room for a choir, sewing room, recreation room, and again fix it for Choir—Vespers and Spiritual Reading. We also had to bake the altar bread there for the whole Diocese (as we had to supply all the churches of that diocese with altar breads). Then again we had to clean it and have it ready for Meditation. Then have the recreation there, and fix it again at night for the Divine Office. Our sleeping rooms could not be arranged so as to have separate cells. We had two rooms into which we accommodated our wooden beds at night, and in the morning raised them to leave room for work, and then put them down again at night, like in the pullmans. We were so close together that it was impossible to kiss the floor, as we are supposed to do so many times during the day when leaving the cells.

We had no place to have a kitchen but in the basement, and the basement was so small that we could not have the refectory there at the same time, so we had to have the refectory in the attic. The food had to be carried from the basement to the attic, and then bring the dishes back to the basement to be washed. But far from disturbing our minds it was recreation, and on many occasions the Bishop came at the very moment when we were carrying the dishes up and down, and it could not be otherwise but in his presence. Of course there was no

place to wash a handkerchief, and we had to send all our clothes to the laundry of the Good Shepherd Sisters, who did us the charity to wash them. The mantles, habits and tunics—all the woolen clothes got shrunken, as they did not know how to wash woolen goods. The heat was very intense in that house in summer time, and we were not allowed to open the windows on account of our enclosure. Our neighbors lived so close to the house that we had to have linen nailed to the windows serving as curtains to prevent them from seeing us, and so the only air we got was the little which escaped through the pores of the cloth. At recreation we did not have a breath of air. The same room served also as our choir. It had only one window. Sometimes, in order to get a little air, we put out the light and took off the nailed up linen over the window. But this could not be done often as we had to work during recreation to earn our living. The refectory which was in the attic was so terribly hot that not one of the sisters could eat anything without vomiting the food. These conditions soon made our sisters very weak, the lack of air and the intense heat and no exercise. With regard to the winter, who could describe the suffering. The roof had so many holes that we could see the sky at any time, and the snow was falling on our heads while we were eating, and there seemed to be no way to heat it. The house was heated with hot air and the poor old furnace broke many a time, and so we had the smoke coming through the frames of the windows and doors at the time we were saying the Divine Office. Sometimes the electricity would go off at the same time, and smoke pervaded the house while the temperature was below zero. Although we tried to conceal our sufferings and not complain about them, in some way our Bishop found it out, and he decided to send a pastoral letter to all the churches begging for alms to build a monastery. This was in the month of November, two years after we arrived in the City of Grand Rapids. The pastoral letter of our dear Bishop is as follows:

“Beloved Brethren of the Clergy and dear Children of the Laity:—For a long time the conviction has grown upon Us, that the work of promoting the glory of God and the salvation of souls in the diocese would never be perfectly rounded out and fully organized, in accordance with the Divine plan, until we had in our midst a contemplative community, devoted wholly

and exclusively to the worship of God, to the higher forms of contemplative prayer, to strict mortification and fasting—in a word—a religious Community whose members would day and night offer themselves as victims on the altar of penance and sacrifice to appease Divine Justice for the sins of their fellowmen. Salvation comes to us all through the sufferings and supplications of Christ for us, and, consequently vicarious atonement—the offering of prayers and penances and sacrifices for one another, is fundamental in the teachings of Christianity. We participate in the merits of Christ, but, by the Communion of Saints, we also share in the good works, prayers and mortifications of our brethren in the faith.

In this busy, active country of ours, we are only too apt to forget the unseen, supernatural forces within our reach and to strive for success with our natural powers and attribute achievement to merely human activity. We are prone in our age to emphasize the natural virtues to the detriment of the supernatural, and easily forget that “more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of”, and that “unless the Lord build the house, in vain they labor who build it”. If the mere presence of ten just men in Sodom and Gomorrhah would have saved those cities of the plain, in spite of their wickedness, from the destroying fire and brimstone, what evils will not be averted and what blessings not invoked by the unceasing prayers and constant sacrifices of a devoted community of nuns, pleading day and night before the throne of Divine Majesty for the spiritual prosperity and welfare of the diocese.

To the casual beholder of the Battle of Raphidim, between the army of Amalec and the hosts of Josue, it would seem that the glory of victory must be ascribed, not to Moses praying on the mountain, but to the valiant warriors of Israel struggling with the foe in the vale beneath. Yet Holy Writ tells us, that “When Moses lifted up his hands Israel overcame, but when he let them down a little, Amalec overcame” showing the need and potency of prayer in shaping even worldly affairs, and proving that the outcome of the struggle and the victory won depended more on the Divine blessing secured by prayer, than on the skill of the general and the valor of the soldiers.

The tendency in our time and country to regard a life spent in contemplation—in divine adoration, prayer and self-

sacrifice, as idle and wasted, and to consider that the highest sanctity can be attained by laboring devotedly for the welfare of our neighbor, did not escape the attention of the Supreme Pontiff, Christ's Vicar on earth. In His encyclical "Testem benevolentiae" addressed to Cardinal Gibbons, Pope Leo XIII warned the Catholics of America against the danger of undervaluing the religious life, and assigned it its true place in the Divine plan of salvation.

Moved by these weighty considerations, We have long cherished the hope, that before We laid down the burden of the Episcopate and our Divine Master called Us to give an account of the souls committed to Our care, we would have the happiness of seeing established in the diocese, a Community devoted to contemplation and penance, praying incessantly for us all—for grace and strength and victory over evil.

Divine Providence, Which knows so well how to draw good from evil, has heard Our prayer and sent Us a community of nuns from the persecuted Church in Mexico. In that distracted country, as you are well aware, the Bishops have been driven into exile; priests have been murdered or subjected to all kinds of indignities and prevented from exercising their sacred functions; convents have been closed and confiscated, and the religious compelled to return to the world and abandon their vocation or seek a home under more favorable skies. Among those who managed to effect their escape with their lives from the cruelty of the inhuman persecutors, was a little band of Discalced Carmelites, whose home in Queretaro was seized and plundered by the revolutionists. They found temporary hospitality, at first, in Cuba and then in New Orleans, where a convent of their order has existed for some time. From New Orleans they appealed to Us for permission to start a foundation in Grand Rapids, and, as We have already had this order in view in Our plans for the future, and knowing how strict the life, how saintly the Rule, and how truly religious is the spirit of this great contemplative order, We saw in their application the answer of Divine Providence to Our inmost prayer and gladly extended to them the hand of welcome.

As many of you may be unfamiliar with the history and spirit of the nuns of Carmel, we point to the great Saint Teresa of the sixteenth century, and Sister Therese de Lisieux, com-

monly known as "The Little Flower of Jesus", of the twentieth century, as illustrious examples of the high degree of sanctity that the observance of the Carmelite rule can and does bring forth. The life of a Carmelite nun is one of seclusion, prayer and mortification. Active work, such as nursing the sick and teaching are out of the question in a cloistered convent. They lead a contemplative life, devoting the greater part of the day to chanting or reciting the divine office, meditation and other pious exercises. Living in great poverty, they never eat meat and keep a rigorous fast from the 14th of September until Easter Sunday, except Sundays and certain great feast days, and abstain even from milk, butter and eggs during Lent, on all Fridays and other fast days prescribed by the Church.

By their holy, consecrated and mortified lives, they will draw down untold blessings on the diocese. We hope, that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit a number of young ladies of our own diocese will experience within themselves the call to a life of contemplation, and will join the little community of Carmelites to increase and continue their work of supplication and expiation in our midst.

There are at present in this pioneer band twelve professed sisters and four novices, sixteen in all. The Sisters of Mercy, of St. Dominic and of Notre Dame, of the Good Shepherd and the Little Sisters of the Poor afforded the newcomers a shelter and sustenance until they rented a small frame house on the corner of Lafayette Ave. and Sycamore St. in the city of Grand Rapids for use as a temporary home.

These Carmelite Sisters have as yet no convent and are absolutely penniless, having lost all they possessed in Mexico. They will need some \$30,000.00 to procure a suitable site and build a convent large enough to meet their requirements. Their present home is altogether unsuited to their needs. The cloistered sisters have no opportunity for out-door recreation but must remain within all the time. With sixteen sisters in a house large enough perhaps for five, it is easy to understand how crowded they are and how difficult it must be to carry out their regular religious life. For the sake of their health they must have better living conditions, and for the proper performance of their religious exercises they must have more room, and consequently the new convent should be built at once if that were possible.

We have granted them the permission to appeal to the charity of the diocese to raise the necessary funds. It will be seen at a glance that unless the contributions are generous, the building of a convent home will be long delayed.

We, therefore, cordially recommend this little community to the kindheartedness of the Clergy and faithful of the diocese and firmly trust, that in a spirit of charity to these victims of persecution, and prizing at their full worth the blessings that such a community will bring down upon the diocese, they will be doubly generous.

As soon as the convent is provided, the Carmelites will become practically self-supporting. During their recreation and free time, they make altar breads and do fine needle work and embroidery. In this manner they hope to earn their scanty needs. We urge all the priests, who do not make their own hosts, to secure them from the Carmelites in Grand Rapids, and we earnestly request the laity, who desire fine laces, etc. to assist this little community by placing their orders with them.

May the grace of God and the charity of Christ remain always with you.

(signed) Henry Joseph, Bishop of Grand Rapids."

Our dear Bishop had decided for me to go out of the enclosure with another sister to make the collection, after the above letter had been read in all the churches, but Our Lord disposed otherwise. The very day appointed on which we were to go out I got suddenly sick with a terrible vomit of blood and everyone feared for my life. I was taken to St. Mary's hospital, as in the house there was no room to keep a sick person. It was a terrible trial for me, as we are never accustomed to go to the hospital, but to get sick and die in the convent we entered. I had, however, the great consolation of having Mother Teresa in the same room with me, as Bishop allowed her to stay, and His Lordship used to come to see me every day. One day when I was unusually sick, and the vomit of blood had repeated three times, his Lordship came to see me. When he learned how sick I was he said quite graciously—"What is this? What are you going to do about that vow you made in prison? When are you going to get well?" Then he kindly passed his hand over my head, read the gospel and said a good many prayers for my health. From that day on I began to recover, and eight days

after on Holy Thursday I was back again at 646 Lafayette St. which I preferred a thousand times to the hospital. Once I recovered our Bishop said to me: "The hand of the Lord is here, and I see that He does not want you to go out to collect, so I will proceed with the collection, although I know we will not collect as much as I had expected." The plans were drawn for the new convent and chapel, but \$15,000.00 was the cost, so it was impossible to build at that time. There was collected \$14,000.00, and this was placed in the bank until it was decided what to do. Our kind Bishop used to visit our Monastery almost every day as His Lordship was going blind, and could see but very little. Rt. Rev. Bishop Gallagher was his Auxiliary, consequently he had to do the work as our dear Bishop Richter could not. Almost every day our dear Bishop came to say Mass for us—as we had as yet no Chaplain and we were under the charity of the different priests of the diocese. As the enclosure could not be kept rigorously as yet, the Priest had to dress inside of the enclosure in order to say Mass, and our dear Bishop used to come to find out if we had enough food and coal, and many times he would not rest until he found out what we had for dinner. It seems that he found a special delight in coming to say Mass for us, as we were only two blocks away from the Bishop's house. The kindness of our dear Bishop went so far that, knowing that the whole Community was Spanish-speaking, although his Lordship could read but very little with one eye (on account of his poor sight), he learned Spanish in order to read the Rule and he held a Canonical Visitation and elections all in Spanish. When we were so happy to have such a father, knowing that we did not deserve him, (for he was such a great consolation to us poor strangers and exiles) his Lordship grew suddenly sick with pneumonia and died within three days. It was a shock for the Community to lose such a father, but God's will had to be done as it was reserved for us to have all kinds of hardships, and it would not be possible to have paradise on earth and at the same time expect the paradise to come. At the death of our dear Bishop, His Lordship Rt. Rev. Michael Gallagher succeeded to the episcopate and he was a true spiritual son of our dear deceased Bishop Richter. He had the same spirit of charity and love towards the exiled Carmelites. Although of a very different character he took

his place and used to say Mass for us almost every day as we could not have a Chaplain, having no house for one, nor could we pay one.

The result of the collection which had begun at the time our dear Bishop sent out the pastoral letter, was \$14,000.00, and in the great kindness of our late Bishop he left us in his will \$10,000.00 for our monastery. As his Lordship had no relations except one sister living in Detroit, to whom he left \$1,000.00, he left the rest to his "Carmelites" as he always called us. We did not realize what a father we had until we lost him, but our consolation has always been to think that at the hour of his death our Holy Mother must surely have met him with extended arms, to welcome the one who had so charitably extended the hand of welcome to her exiled daughters. Oh what a reward our dear Bishop must have had in heaven for the great charity he had shown to the poor exiled daughters of St. Teresa . . . Our new Bishop Gallagher inherited the charity of our dear Bishop Richter, and knowing that twelve of our sisters developed T.B. in that house, he insisted that, with the \$24,000.00 we had, we buy a frame house, but large enough that we could have air and better health (four of our sisters by this time had become victims of the terrible disease). A frame house was bought at 1256 Walker Ave. and given the form of a monastery as far as possible, with the cement wall around and twenty-four rooms in the house, and a large choir. It was, however, impossible to have a separate cell for each sister, as our holy Rule commands, but we had to be satisfied to have a large dormitory divided with curtains. We had our novitiate entirely separate. On May 17th, 1918, His Lordship the Rt. Rev. Bishop, Michael James Gallagher visited the new Discalced Carmelite Monastery on Walker Ave., blessed the little chapel, choir, sacristy and the entire convent. At the conclusion of the blessing His Lordship offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and we then took possession. We had passed two years and six months in our little house on Lafayette St. and only God knows the hardships we had to undergo in that little house, so we were very happy to move to this large one, which seems to us more like paradise on earth. After Mass the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, the Te Deum intoned by his Lordship and sung by the Community, and our Rt. Rev.

Bishop sang the prayers, and then Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament was given. Then followed the act of Canonical enclosure. This was read by Bishop's Secretary, and signed by his Lordship and the two witnesses—Rev. John Sonefield, Secretary, Rev. Charles Van Colen, Witness and Rev. Salvatore Cianci, witness. Thus the sufferings of our exile came to an end, and we thought of nothing else but to please God and keep our Rule.

Soon after, the three years of the elections were completed, and His Lordship held a canonical visitation, followed by the election of the new superioress. When I thought I was set free to begin my work for the Third Order Mother House, as was our dear Bishop Richter's intention, I was elected Prioress of Grand Rapids, which of course delayed the fulfillment of my vows. I spoke of my vow to our Rt. Rev. Bishop Gallagher, as I was desirous of knowing his opinion in its regard, and far from advising me to give up the idea, his Lordship said to me that soon he was going to be transferred to the diocese of Detroit. He thought Grand Rapids was too small a City in which to begin such a work, but Detroit he said was much larger, and his Lordship could give me an opening right there to begin the Mother House of the Third Order Sisters of the Discalced Carmelite Order.

The vocations started to be so numerous that it was necessary to start the foundations which dear Bishop Richter had predicted when his Lordship obliged me to add another vow to the one I had made—that of making four more foundations. By this time twelve of our Mexican Sisters had developed consumption, almost immediately after our establishment in Grand Rapids, partly due to our previous hardships but mostly from the change in climate. We had come from a very hot country and Grand Rapids was at that time of the year very damp and cold. Our Rt. Rev. Bishop Gallagher advised me, as the revolution had somewhat abated, to make a new foundation on the frontier of Mexico, in order to save the lives of our sisters, and in case of a renewal of the revolution they would be close enough to the United States to fly quickly to safety. In view of these facts, on October 5th, 1919, six of our sisters, namely: Rev. Mother Mary of Jesus (in the world Maria de la Luz Uguiaga), Sr. Teresa of Jesus (in the world Maria Valdez), Sr. Teresa of the Holy Face (in the world Margaret Murphy), Sr. Guadalupe of

the Blessed Sacrament (in the world Angela Pozo), Sr. Mary of Jesus (in the world Clementina Negrete), Sr. Mary of the Immaculate Conception (in the world Euphrosina Nieto), and Sr. Agnes of Jesus who died six months after arriving there, left the Grand Rapids Monastery to go to the new foundation of Silao, Gto. Mexico, where the monastery is situated in a village outside of the City, close to the Monastery of our Carmelite Fathers, from whom they receive assistance. They have at the same time the choir of the big Church of the Carmelite Fathers, and part of the big monastery of the same Carmelite Fathers. A Carmelite nun from some other Community of Mexico joined our Monastery there in Silao, and as she had just received her inheritance from her father and mother, which amounted to over \$300,000.00, she bought half of the big monastery of the Carmelite Friars also the Church, and built a small convent for the four Carmelite Friars who were allowed to remain in Mexico. Each nun has her separate cell, they enjoy a large church and attend the choir of the church for all the services so that no secular is allowed to sing in the choir, as the enclosure is well kept in spite of the revolution.

At the present time the number of the religious is complete in that monastery in Silao, and only one of our sisters was a victim of the terrible disease; the other five survived. There is no danger of revolution in that village as it is very far from the large cities.

In order to fulfill my mission and encourage the sisters to go to that foundation, I myself took them to the City, opened the Monastery, and after the canonical erection and enclosure, etc., was enforced, and things were running satisfactorily, I returned, but thus I fulfilled my obligation of the second foundation, according to the wishes of my dear Bishop Richter. No harm happened to us on the way, although we had to go in disguise, for by this time I had learned well the art of disguising myself, and running so many risks. I saw the spot on which I was taken prisoner four years previous, but far from being frightened, I looked at the spot with great satisfaction, thanking our dear Lord and the Little Flower of Jesus, as I owed my escape to her. On my return from Silao, Gto., the father of Sister Teresita (a child whom we had received in the Carmel of Queretaro before our exile) begged me to take Sister Teresita

along with us. Owing to the revolution we had placed her in an Academy of the same Sisters where our own were hidden, as she insisted on becoming a Carmelite. She entered our Carmel at Grand Rapids at the age of fourteen years, with the permission of Bishop Kelly, successor to Rt. Rev. Bishop Gallagher, who was transferred to the diocese of Detroit.

FOUNDATION OF BUFFALO, N.Y.

A few months after I returned from Mexico after making the foundation of Silao, Rev. Mother Gabriel, Prioress of the Carmel of St. Louis, Mo., wrote to us, asking for a few of our sisters to go with her on a new foundation in the city of Buffalo, New York, for which she had made arrangements with Rt. Rev. Bishop Dougherty, Bishop of Buffalo. As we were under great obligations to the St. Louis Carmel, as well as that of New Orleans, it seemed impossible to refuse their petition, and so we wrote promising them the desired assistance. When we had all things arranged and our sisters were ready to go to Buffalo, we received a telegram from St. Louis, Mo., signed by the Prioress, Mother Gabriel, telling us to wait and that a letter would follow. The next day we received the letter in which it was stated that Rev. Mother Gabriel who had asked for the sisters to go to help her in the foundation, had failed to receive the necessary permission from Archbishop Glennon to go to Buffalo, and thus she would be unable to begin the foundation. In her letter she begged us to go ahead and make the foundation, as the property had already been secured at a great cost by Rt. Rev. Bishop William Turner, successor to Bishop Dougherty, who had been transferred to the diocese of Philadelphia. Under such circumstances we seemed compelled to let our sisters go, but of course the personnel was very young. As our old sisters did not speak English, our Mother Teresa advised me to take up the foundation and go myself and establish the house, and remain there until our Rule was established and it could run by itself. The Sisters who went with me to the foundation of Buffalo Carmel, are as follows:

Sr. Mary of the Incarnation of the Holy Face, Mother Sub-Prioress and First Clavarian.

Sr. Mary of St. John of the Cross, Second Clavarian.

Sr. M. Magdalen of Jesus, Third Clavarian.

Sr. Mary of the Angels of Jesus Crucified, Third Order Sister,

Sr. Anna of St. Bartholomew, Third Order Sister.

Sr. Solitude of the Blessed Sacrament, Third Order Sister

Sr. Teresita of the Infant Jesus, Postulant.

Sister Mary of the Incarnation, (in the world Guadalupe Rosas), and Sister Teresita of the Infant Jesus, (in the world Anna Rosas), were sisters by blood. Sister Teresita is that child who was received in the foundation of Queretaro in the year 1911, at the age of six years and a half. Although she could not then become a novice on account of being so young, she was allowed by the Rt. Rev. Manuel Ribera, Bishop of Queretaro, to enter the enclosure and live as a postulant until she was fifteen years old, and could receive the habit of the Order, but owing to the revolution the order was given to our Superiors to dissolve the Convents and disguise the habits. Many of the sisters were obliged to live in their own homes. Sister Teresita and her younger sister, Marina Rosas, age five years, were placed in an Academy of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, in Aguascalientes, Mexico, 500 miles from Queretaro. If the reader remembers, this Academy of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception is the place where our sisters were hidden for three months during the time of the revolution, where they had to crawl through a little hole in order to get out to hear Mass.

Sister Solitude of the Blessed Sacrament (Jacoba Medina)

Sister Mary of the Angels, (in the world Refugio Marquez); Sister Magdalen of Jesus, (in the world Guadalupe Sotura), and Sister Anna of Bartholomew, (in the world Maria Garcia), were four of our novices who remained faithful to their vocation, and went from place to place with the Community, suffering the same hardships during the time of the revolution.

On April 13, 1920, we offered the sacrifice to our Lord and divided the Community, although some had already departed for the foundation of Silao, Gto. How shall we explain what we felt at the hour of our separation? We felt it more keenly than when we had to leave our monastery at the time of the revolution, as then we had the hope of being re-united again, but now our Lord demanded great sacrifices on both sides. Now the bell rang, and the turn Sister passed the message that the machines were there waiting for the sisters. Our Rev. Mother Teresa, who loves her children tenderly, and who never had been separated from me since my entrance into the Carmelite Order, with the exception of the short time I went to Cuba to

save some of the sisters, hoping to be re-united very soon, at least when the revolution was over. But now the sacrifice is quite different. I knelt down to beg Rev. Mother Teresa's blessing, and said to her: "My dear Mother, God wants this sacrifice! Bless me! And bless the work I am going to start all by myself, without your Reverence's help." One after another came to receive Mother's blessing. Then we went to the regular door where we embraced each other, and promised our prayers. The regular door was opened but nobody dared to step out until the command of obedience was given to us by Mother Teresa. "Go", she said, "and give glory to God." I was the first intrepid one to step out and the others followed. I went to the Chapel and knelt down before the Blessed Sacrament to pray for strength to complete my sacrifice. My companions followed me, and a few minutes after we were at the Union Depot. The train started, and we bade farewell to the city of Grand Rapids which had given shelter to the exiled Carmelites, and where we left our hearts with our sisters in the little house on Walker Avenue.

We arrived at Buffalo the next day, April 14, 1920. Msgr. Baker met us at the depot and conducted us to our new home, at 49 Cottage Street. The house was still being repaired and it was impossible to remain there because of the many working men, so after having seen the house and having given our orders for the proper repairs and division of the house, our kind benefactor, Msgr. Nelson Baker, took us to the Sisters of St. Joseph, who live across on Edward Street, where we stayed for ten days until the house was finished. We used to go every day to clean the house and prepare the Chapel and all the necessary things for the opening of the new monastery.

During the ten days that we were with the Sisters of St. Joseph, by the command of Msgr. Baker, the Vicar General, I was sent down town, accompanied by two of the prominent ladies of Buffalo, Miss Josephine Colton, sister of the former Bishop Colton of Buffalo, and Mrs. Gavin, to buy the necessary furniture to furnish the house. This was quite hard for me to come out of my Monastery of Grand Rapids to be then in the stores in the midst of so many people. Many times we were shopping the whole day, and as usual I was conducted by Miss Colton, and when I least thought, believing I was entering a dry-goods store, to my surprise I saw facing me many Carmelites

just like me (the mirrors of the restaurant where Miss Colton, without telling me, had decided to take lunch.) There was nothing left for me to do but to submit, as long as I was in, and to accept the lunch which was given me in charity.

Many of the ladies of the city, who afterwards became our principal benefactors, used to come to help us clean the windows at the new Monastery; for instance, the Misses Russell, Mary Brown, Miss Nenno, Margaret Dunn, and many others. If it were not for their help we could never have cleaned the house in eight days and gotten it ready for the opening, as our Bishop had already set the day.

On April 24, 1920, our new convent was formally opened. Our dear Rt. Rev. Bishop William Turner celebrated the Mass, at which Doctor James Mooney sang the most beautiful "Magnificat". At the Mass we received Holy Communion, renewed our vows in the hands of our new Prelate in testimony of our obedience to him. After Mass the Rt. Rev. Bishop Turner solemnly blessed the house from the attic to the basement, while Doctor James Mooney continually sang in Gregorian the "Asperges"; the nuns went through the house reciting the "Miserere" and the people who were present at the Mass followed the Bishop who was blessing the house, together with the Clergy. Amongst them were: Msgr. Baker, Rev. Father Alphonsus Duff, O.F.M., (who afterwards became our Ordinary Confessor, being appointed by the Bishop), Doctor Donohue and his two Assistants, Rev. Father A'Hearn, S.J., and many others whose names I do not remember now. The Te Deum was sung in thanksgiving of the new Monastery. The Act of Canonical Enclosure was read; the regular doors were closed with the accustomed ceremony, and thus we took possession of the Carmel of Buffalo.

Without seeking on my part I thus made the third foundation according to our dear Bishop Richter's mind, and realized how true it is that he is helping me from heaven to make these foundations, as he promised that what he could not do on earth (because he was taken very soon to his eternal reward) he would do in heaven.

The reader will remember that out of the sixteen Carmelites who were saved from the revolution and transferred to the diocese of Grand Rapids, twelve were taken with consumption of the lungs because of the cold climate, six of whom were sent to the

foundation of Silao with the hope that they would regain their health. One of these sisters died six months after they arrived in Silao. Sister Mary of the Incarnation and Sister Solitude of the Blessed Sacrament were two of those victims who were taken with consumption, and notwithstanding the care I took of them in the foundation of Buffalo they died. Sister Mary of the Incarnation was sick three years of that awful disease, and suffered untold agonies, being ten months in bed. She was consumed to such a degree that the flesh was pasted to the bones, and she died on the 27th of March, 1923. Sister Solitude, after having been sick for the same length of time, passed her last eight months in bed, and died of starvation because of the contraction of the stomach.

The deaths of these two exemplary sisters, victims of the revolution, were most edifying. How they sanctified their days by offering to our Lord their sufferings for the sanctification of the clergy of the diocese. It was an edification to me when I used to go around to visit them, and find out their sufferings. Many times they passed the whole night coughing, not being able to close their eyes for one instant, and at the same time kept united to God in such a manner that they would not separate one instant from the Will of God. For ten days, from the 17th to the 27th of March, Sister Mary of the Incarnation was in agony, as she begged our Lord to let her suffer in union with His Divine Passion, and purify her in this life so that she would not be separated from him for one instant after her death. Once when talking to her I asked her: "How shall I know that you are in heaven after you die?" and she said to me: "There will not pass twenty-four hours without letting you know where I am." Of course that did not worry me in the least at that moment.

The day she died, as usual I came to see her after Mass, and she said: "Oh how many centuries of sufferings I passed last night!" And the rattling in her throat prevented her from speaking any more. Then she fell into a coma. I realized that she was very near to the end. Then she came out of that state and recognized me once more and said to me: "Mother, I think my time is approaching; will your Reverence give me permission to die?" "If it is God's Will, my child," I said, "yes! But if it is not, suffer a little longer." She then fell into a worse syncope. Then I could see all the signs of death approaching, so I sounded

the clappers to get all the Community together. All came to her cell, wearing their white mantles and carrying lighted candles as our Ceremonial prescribes. We said the prayers for the dying, and it was very keen suffering for me to pronounce these words to her: "Proficiscere, anima christiana, de hoc mundo," "Depart Christian soul from this world," etc. One hour later she was gone to her eternal reward. After she expired the Community sang the "Credo" and recited the other prayers; then we sang the responsory "Subvenite Sancti Dei", etc., and the following prayers as noted in our Ritual. Having taken her body from the chair where she died, we washed her face, hands and feet, and dressed her with the habit, cincture, scapular, toque, veil, and mantle, and layed her upon the wooden bed. The bell was rung to get the Community together to continue the prayers and responses for the dead, after which, singing the psalm "In Exitu Israel de AEGypto" we took the body to the sacristy where she lay until the funeral day. We covered her with flowers, and instead of her face changing with the horror of death she became more beautiful every minute.

When the evening came I was so tired that it was necessary for me to take a little rest. I directed my steps to our cell, and I was lying down only one minute when suddenly the thought came to my mind: "There will not pass twenty-four hours without letting you know where I am." I felt as though I actually heard those words in my ears, and my fear was such that a minute afterwards I was out of our cell, looking for somebody to accompany me as I did not dare to stay alone. As I was so sick and exhausted, ready to faint any minute, it was absolutely necessary to take a little rest, so I got Sister Mary of the Angels for my companion and said to her: "Please come and sleep with me in our cell, I am afraid." Of course she understood what I meant. By the mercy of God I slept four hours. At four o'clock I awoke and the first thought was the same: "There will not pass twenty-four hours without letting you know where I am." I got out of our cell immediately as my companion had left a little while before, and finding myself alone I said: "This is not with me! I'll get out." Not knowing what I was doing I went right straight to the corpse of Sr. Mary of the Incarnation to say some prayers, and when I came near I saw her so beautiful; the light of the moon was shining in her face; her face was

so smiling like a person in a happy sleep, and coming nearer and nearer I said to her, (pointing to her with my finger), "Oh Sister, I think I know where you are!" And without any fear I took up her hand, and it was so soft that it slipped down once more. Then I pressed it with my both hands and said to her: "Oh, you are a happy, lucky one," and something interiorly assured me that she was enjoying the Beatific Vision of God. From that moment on the fear left me. I could be left alone the other nights which preceded her funeral, as she died on Holy Tuesday and was not buried until Good Friday.

The Requiem Mass was sung on Wednesday, on account of the Holy Week, and also the Office of the Dead was said on that day in the morning, as in the afternoon we had the Tenebrae and no funeral could be had on those days. On Good Friday, after the usual Office of the Holy Week, the ceremony of the burial was performed according to our Ceremonial, and it was very impressive. For instance, when the Prioress veils the face of the nun and pours ashes in the form of a cross on her face, then kneeling down three times the Chantresses sang: "Domine miserere", and the Community answered: "Super ista peccatrice", etc. After the long, long suffrages for the dead we parted with our dear Sister Mary of the Incarnation, who entered our community of Queretaro in 1909 at the age of sixteen years, having been fourteen years in the religious life; and died at the age of thirty years, on March 27th, 1923.

On the 29th of the same year, we celebrated in the Chapel of our Monastery of Buffalo, with a solemn novena, the Beatification of the "Little Flower of Jesus", as that Monastery was in a special manner dedicated to her.

On the 12th of the following June, our dear Sister Solitude of the Blessed Sacrament died of the same disease, consumption, and her sickness and death were very much similar to that of Sister Mary of the Incarnation. The day before her death she confided to me that she had offered her life for the priests of the diocese. Msgr. Nelson Baker officiated at her funeral. She died at the moment of the consecration of the Mass. She gave signs of having seen something heavenly a minute before she expired. As a child she used to ask her mother to explain to her what was meant by the "Virgins who followed the Lamb". After her mother explained this to her she used to answer:

"Oh, I want to be one of them." One minute before her death she stopped the rattling in her throat and turned her face to the right, and seemed as though she were seeing and counting a great multitude, which her eyes followed around the room very slowly. I asked her (taking her hand at the same time), "What are you seeing?" Then she made a movement with her head as if to say: "See yourself!" as she could talk no more, and at the same moment she closed her eyes, never to open them again. The thought came to my mind that maybe she was seeing the "Virgins who follow the Lamb", as her life had been a very simple one. She was the most humble soul. She possessed every virtue: humility, meekness, obedience, charity, and she had a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Mother. Her virtues were so numerous that I could not say what one she practiced the most. She entered our community in Queretaro, at the age of nineteen years, in 1913, and died on June 12th, 1923, in the twenty-ninth year of her age, having been ten years in the convent.

Our Lord gave me many crosses in the foundation of Buffalo, which I will not mention here, and the death of these two sisters I felt very keenly because of the great help they were to me.

CARMEL OF SCHENECTADY, N.Y.

In the month of June, 1922, I received a letter from Rev. Mother Rose, Prioress of the Carmel of St. Louis, Mo., asking for a few sisters to go once more with Rev. Mother Gabriel, (the former Prioress of that Carmel), to make a new foundation, without telling us the place. As the number of our sisters was completed, and there were many applicants who could not enter because we had no place for them, it was not difficult for us to give up a certain number of our sisters to go with Rev. Mother Gabriel to the new foundation, although all of them were very young. The Rev. Mother Prioress continued writing in earnest to get the sisters to go to this new foundation. Of course our sisters were trained in such a manner that it was not necessary for them to be asked whether they wanted to go or not, as it was only necessary to tell them where to go, when obedience would command them to do so. Thus we could promise without asking who was willing to go, and depart from their beloved home where they had entered.

The Rev. Mother Prioress of St. Louis stated that it was necessary for Rev. Mother Gabriel (who was going to make the foundation) to come to the Buffalo Carmel in order to prepare for the said foundation, and at the same time to learn the Spanish customs, as these were entirely different from theirs. Our Rt. Rev. Bishop Turner was then in Rome and in his place the Vicar General, Msgr. Nelson H. Baker, was left to govern the diocese, so we applied to him for the necessary permission for Mother Gabriel to come to the Buffalo Carmel to prepare for her new foundation. On August 16, 1922, Rev. Mother Gabriel arrived at our Monastery, with the necessary permission of Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis. To my great surprise in the first interview I had with her Reverence she questioned me where the new foundation was going to be, and at the same time I questioned her where the foundation was going to be. "Oh, I thought you had a foundation ready for me!" she said, "As our Mother Rose told me you wanted me here for help." Then I showed her the letters of Rev. Mother Rose, and we found that there was a misunderstanding in regard to that

foundation, as we ourselves had never intended making a new foundation on account of our sisters being so young. As Rev. Mother Gabriel seemed very anxious to have a foundation of her own, we promised to give the necessary help, provided she herself secured the foundation, and also promise to take up our Spanish customs, as our sisters were trained to these.

Our Rev. Father Chaplain, in his great zeal, promised to secure a foundation for Mother Gabriel at the time of his vacation. He expected to go to Albany diocese to see if he could secure one there, or in the near cities, as he had great confidence that he would secure one. For this reason he sent a telegram to his Lordship, Rt. Rev. Edmund F. Gibbons, Bishop of Albany, to make an appointment to speak with him, which he succeeded in doing two or three days later. The Rt. Reverend Bishop answered, kindly saying that he would wait for him in his office at the time appointed on September 2nd, Thursday morning. Our Rev. Father Chaplain left on the 31st of August, and after having an interview with the Rt. Rev. Bishop Gibbons, he wrote me the following letter:

September 3, 1922.

Dear Mother:

We have been so constantly on the go that the writing of a letter was almost impossible. The auto all day and small hotels late at night, without writing material, etc. etc., and the Divine Office facing me in the usual exhausted condition.

We arrived at Albany late Wed. night in frightful heat. Thursday shortly after 9 A.M., called on Bishop Gibbons. Before meeting him no thought would come just what to say, in order to make a Carmelite hit. But — Oh! when once started, Saint Theresa was right on the job. Words and sentences flowed. He listened most attentively sometimes showing emotion. Here and there he got a chance to ask a question which was a privilege I gave the Bishop. God was with us! We won! He said: "Albany itself is no place for the Carmelites as we have two contemplative orders in the city, and religious of all kinds. But seventeen miles out of the city towards Buffalo, on the main line of the N.Y. Central Road from Buffalo to New York is the large city of Schenectady. There we have no order of contemplation. The city is nearly as large as Albany, but more important and active. I know the City and it is a wonderful

place. Let us go there immediately and look around the city." So after lunch the Bishop and I went to Schenectady and located a wonderful house, which came to us like the pointing of the finger of God. The Bishop asked, "How is this place? I have had my eye on this property for a long while, and who knows but that Saint Theresa saved it for us." Two short streets from the Main Street, near where the city growth must be, wonderfully secluded and a magnificent brown stone house.

We will not need one cent to buy, as the Bishop said, he would care for all himself. Often did I think of: "Tell father to get busy at once." She, our good mother, was with us and I demand and have already asked the Bishop to call the foundation "The Carmel of St. Teresa of Jesus." Settled! Mother Gabriel will have nothing to say about the name: *Roma locuta est, causa finita*. Father (Rome) has spoken the case is closed. (Free translation.)

As a matter of form, the Bishop is going to bring the matter before his consultants, but practically stated it would be only a matter of form. So, we can count on the foundation for the immediate future.

The Bishop intends writing you to see if you will be satisfied with Schenectady. All you have to say is: "Yes, his will is your will." — that city is even better than Albany. I, too, am personally acquainted, and can state it is a wonderful chance. Bishop Gibbons may wait for my return to Buffalo before writing as he wanted to know about how long I would be absent. Think of my happiness at this success from heaven! I bless God to spread the Order and the work of reparation to the Heart of the Sacramental Jesus. May the Albany diocese foundation prove a blessing for generation after generation.

We expect to leave here for Montreal tomorrow. It is only eighty miles from Dannamora. Too much going to get rest — but it is a change. Of course our minds go back constantly to our daughters at 49 Cottage St. Will be glad to get back to them again.

Tell Theresa and Grace, I will write them from St. Ann, and that Frank and self are wonderfully well.

God bless you and all is the earnest prayer of

Your Father in Christ,

(signed) Geo. A. Crimmen.

A few days later I received the following letter from his Lordship, Rt. Rev. Edmund F. Gibbons, Bishop of Albany:
September 5, 1922.

Dear Mother:

Perhaps Fr. Crimmen has already informed you of the result of his visit to Albany, at least in a general way.

I felt when he expressed to me the desire of the Carmelite Sisters to open a house in the diocese of Albany, that my dear St. Teresa was knocking at my door, and what else could I do but open it to her eagerly and gratefully.

From the day I took possession as pastor of her church in Buffalo I realized that God in his mercy had put a new force into my priestly life; and now I believe in my heart that she is coming into my episcopal work to bless it and make it more Christlike and more fruitful.

The first parish that I formed as Bishop of Albany was named St. Teresa's. Is this her recognition of my love and devotion for her, to send her daughters to me? I would like to believe it so.

Fr. Crimmen will explain to you why I thought the City of Schenectady would be a better place to locate a Carmel than Albany or Troy. Both the latter are well provided with religious houses, while Schenectady has not one, save five parochial schools. It is a large place, in the neighborhood of 75,000 population, with fourteen parishes. It grew from a village to a large city in a few years, and that accounts largely for the dearth of Catholic institutions. It has two great industries, the General Electric Company, and the American Locomotive Works. It is besides a very beautiful city of homes, much like the west side district of Buffalo. But you will not be so much interested in it for these commercial reasons, except to know that it will, with God's blessing and through St. Teresa's intercession, be a good field to supply you with vocations. I am sure there are as many good devout girls in it as in any city of its size. What it needs most is a spiritual tonic, such as the presence of a Carmel will surely bring. I have felt much stronger ever since Fr. Crimmen was here that God and St. Teresa directed him to Albany diocese. I have prayed and prayed for this city since I came to know its needs, and I see plainly now that your spiritual daughters, dear Mother, are going to be God's agency to put into Schenec-

tady the spirit of religion that is needed there.

Now about the property. Today I had word from the real estate agent that the owner was willing to sell for \$20,000, and agreed to give possession by November 1st. She asked first to remain there until next May, but I would not consent to it. So finally she yielded. A contract has been signed, and she is now bound by law to sell to us. She has no idea for whom the property is being bought, nor has anybody else.

About two years ago the property was offered to me for \$18,000. It was well worth it, but I had no use for it at the time. Since then the paving and extension of some streets nearby, one of them bordering the property, have added to its value. The house could not be built today for less than \$40,000. It is mostly of brown stone and finished in fine style, and in excellent condition. How it will work out for a Carmel I can't say, for I don't know just what you require; but it can be altered or added to if necessary and made to suit your purposes.

The location could not be better. The street is somewhat secluded but only one or two blocks from the main thoroughfare, only two blocks away is St. Luke's Church, a growing parish, and a few blocks in another direction, St. Columba's, one of the best parishes in the city. There is no street car line on the street, but there is one a block away, which makes it easy of access to any part of Schenectady.

The grounds are simply wonderful, for a cloistered community. The frontage is I should say about 250 ft., and depth perhaps 400. The rear of the grounds, which are well wooded, is a slope down into a ravine. The rear line of the property runs through the bottom of it, and the land sloping up the other side will probably never be utilized for building. The Sisters can be absolutely secluded if they wish to take the air.

Adjoining the property on one side is a high class printing establishment, quite noiseless and removed some distance from the dividing line. On the other side is a house, and a street that will cross the ravine high up. In a few days I shall send you a map of the property, and by that time I shall have seen the interior of the house and will be able to give you a good idea of it.

You will understand that I have practically bought the property; at least an option has been purchased and a deposit

made by my agent. I shall take title in my name as Bishop, and when you are in possession I shall deed it to the community. I hope in time you will be able to pay off the debt. Meanwhile you need not worry. If necessary I shall pay your interest until you are able to do so. How much it will cost to fit the house to your purposes I can not tell until I know just what your needs are. Of one thing you may be certain: the community you send will have in their Bishop a father.

Now write me your full mind on the matter, and first of all signify your willingness to accept the property. Possibly you and a companion could come down, see it for yourselves and give me an idea of what is needed. I could then get an architect to work out a plan of necessary alterations, if any are necessary, and put the house in proper condition before the little community takes possession. If it is not against your Constitution to come on such an expedition, I should be glad to defray your travelling expenses, and find hospitality for you and your companion in one of the religious houses in Schenectady. It is on the main line of the N.Y. Central about 18 miles west of Albany, (i.e. nearer Buffalo). This would be the best plan if it is possible. We can go through the house at any time now.

In a few days I hope to find time to look over the property carefully. Then you may expect to hear from me again.

In the meantime I shall pray earnestly that God's holy will may be known to us, and all the rest will follow in due time.

With a fervent blessing on you and your community, and asking you to commend me to dear St. Teresa, I am,

Yours sincerely in Xto.,

(signed) Edmund F. Gibbons

Bishop of Albany.

I would be grateful for a copy of your holy Rule and Constitutions.

The following is our acknowledgement of our dear Bishop Gibbons' kind letter:

Buffalo, N.Y. Sept. 8, 1922.

Our Very Dear Bishop:

Words can never tell the consolation caused by your wonderful letter of September 5th. Such a beautiful letter! So full of charity and fatherly solicitude for us unworthy Carmelites, and love for our dear Mother St. Teresa of Jesus. Never can

we sufficiently thank our Blessed Lord in giving us such a genuine friend and kind father.

When Father Crimmen arrived last night, he informed us of the kindly way your Lordship received our request for a foundation in your diocese, and the reason for your suggesting Schenectady. Blessed be God! The very kind of place we yearn to live in as victims of our Crucified Love.

From your Lordship's letter and Father's statements even the house and grounds were prepared by God's Providence. Such desirable property and so reasonable! Rev. Father Crimmen well knows our Rule and requirements and with that knowledge is most enthusiastic over the property. Dear Bishop, our Blessed Lord seems to point His finger to the very spot. We beg you, in His holy name, give it to us, and soon we will manage all obligations excepting the debt of gratitude due our dear Bishop Gibbons. All of our foundations become self supporting after the people know of the Convent — Schenectady will not prove an exception.

So convinced are we that your choice of property is the will of God that we feel there is not sufficient necessity for our leaving the enclosure until we leave to remain. Moreover, a kind father, such as your dear self, always knows what is best for his children.

To help your Lordship and ourselves we are going to make a suggestion. As we Nuns find it frightfully hard to deal with the outside world after years of the absolutely hidden life, would you not permit our Father Crimmen to arrange the changes which will be required to transform the house into a convent? One must know our Rule and customs to do this work, and these Father knows perfectly. Father has kindly consented to do this work provided your Lordship thinks best. In all things — your will is ours.

We are sending a copy of our Primitive Rule and Constitutions, which have always been kept by the Carmelites in Spain, and which we translated from Spanish to English. We were just finished with this translation about two years ago when we received from Rome the new Constitutions which are now in accordance with the new Canon Law in regard to Postulants, Novices, first vows and final vows. This we are translating, as also the Ceremonial; as soon as we have finished we will send it to your Lordship, including the notice that since the Nuns of

Spain, by the ruling of the several Congregations of Bishops and Regulars, considering the special conditions obtaining in that Kingdom, are temporarily, while said ruling is in force, subject to the ordinary Prelates, everything in the Constitutions and Ceremonial referring to the Father General, Provincial or Prelate of the Order, must be understood in reference to the Diocesan Prelate.

It is useless for us to try to thank your Lordship for the extraordinary favors showered upon us. We beg Jesus to reward you. May Teresa of Jesus ever plead to Him for all you have so generously done for her unworthy daughters. May God spare you. May Jesus ever love you, will be the constant prayer of

Your most grateful daughter in Jesus and Mary,

(signed) Sister Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament

D. C. Prioress

In reply our dear Reverend Bishop wrote me the following letter:
September 11, 1922.

Dear Mother:

Your letter of acceptance of Sept. 8 is very comforting to me. I am perfectly convinced that it is the holy will of God that the Carmelites should come to this diocese, and Schenectady seems to be the best place for them. I am glad that you view it in the same light.

The property is secured and will be mine in a day or two. I looked it all over very carefully yesterday, and it even surpasses my expectations. I have only one fault to find with it: we shall have to spoil a very beautiful house to make it a fit Carmel. But what of that! We can leave what is substantial, I hope, and destroy the vain and worldly.

For a better understanding of the plan of the building I am sending you a very crude sketch of two floors. It will give you some idea of its size and perhaps enable you to make some suggestions as to alterations. I enclose also an outline on tissue paper of the property. If you lay it on a white surface you can see the lines more clearly. I am not artist enough to show the slope of land, the trees and vegetation. Fr. Crimmen will describe it better to you after he sees it.

I approve heartily of your suggestion that he come here as your representative and between us and a good architect we shall, I am sure, be able to work out a suitable plan. The house is in first class condition, the cellar is as dry as the parlor, the

attic is wonderful. Besides the city water you have rain water for washing, piped into the laundry tubs.

The building is brown stone back as far as the dining-room; the rest is brick painted brown.

I shall be glad to have your Rules and Constitutions and hope to study them diligently.

While we may not get possession of the property until November, it would be well for Father to come on soon, so as to decide upon the plans. It will take time to perfect them. I shall have to go to Washington about Sept. 21 or 22, and from there I am going to the far west. I may not be back before the middle of October. If possible then, Father would better come this week or early next week. He will probably have to make more than one trip before matters are settled. I wish he would telegraph me the day before he starts.

I thank you for your fervent prayers for me, and God's work committed to me. I know He will hear them.

Sincerely in Xto.,

(signed) Edmund F. Gibbons,

Bp. Albany.

About September 15th, Father Crimmen, the Chaplain of our Buffalo Carmel left for Albany to see Bishop Gibbons, and before leaving he sent a telegram as Bishop had requested. Father knew perfectly well our requirements in regard to repairs and during his interview with the Bishop, His Lordship decided to divide the rooms of the house and to transform them into cells, and to make some other necessary changes, so that the house could be used as a monastery.

On October 29th, I received another kind letter from our dear Bishop Gibbons. Every one of his Lordship's letters is a treasure to us because they show what a kind and affectionate father our community will have.

October 29, 1922.

Dear Mother:

Your good sisters of Wheeling, W. Va., have been sending me souvenirs of the ter-centenary celebration of the canonization of our holy mother, St. Teresa of Jesus, held in their monastery; and the reading of some sketches of her life and labors, this morning, naturally brought to my mind our plans for the prospective foundation in Schenectady.

I was called away from my diocese for four weeks, and returned only a week ago. The 15th of October I passed in New York City, and I need not assure you that I was in communion with you all during the Holy Sacrifice. I only regretted that I could not say Mass in honor of *her*, it being Sunday and I was obliged by the rubrics to celebrate the Mass of the Sunday.

Now I have a piece of good news for you. — (What have you been doing with our dear Mother?) Father Crimmen perhaps told you of a noble benefactress of our diocese, Mrs. James C. Farrell. God alone knows all she has done and is actually doing for Church and charity. Well, I had occasion to visit her at her summer home during my travels, and told her at length of some of my plans for the spread of the Kingdom of God in our diocese. She has every right to know them, for under God I owe to her a large part of the means to carry them out. I had written her some weeks before that a great blessing was soon to descend upon us all which I promised to reveal to her later. I meant the foundation of our Carmel. — Strange enough I was not long in her house when she told me that her little girl — 9 years of age — had been reading a life of the Little Flower for children, which some priest had given her, and the child had fallen so desperately in love with your little Saint that she was showing the book to all the visitors at the house. Her mother told me not to be surprised if the child gave me the book to read. I didn't wait for this but asked the Mother for the book and glanced over it. I came upon one short paragraph with the information that the Carmelite Nuns of St. Teresa's reform had as one of their principal objects to pray and do penance for the bishops and priests of the church. I read the paragraph for Mrs. Farrell, and it gave me just what I wanted for a *text*.

I shall not attempt to repeat my sermon, but I told Mrs. Farrell of my own devotion to St. Teresa — and, by the way, it was part of her parish in Albany that cut off and formed into St. Teresa's — of her spiritual daughters, of our needs, of Schenectady and *its* needs, of the wonderful property, my plans for the alterations, the *Chapel*, etc.

She was deeply interested, as she is in all religious, and their works. — She has been especially good to the Sisters of Mercy; and gave them the use of her former home for a novitiate. — I declare I had not the least thought of seeking financial aid from

her for the Carmelites. In fact I told her that the foundation would be self-supporting. But St. Teresa evidently had a different view of the situation; and the next day at dinner, just before leaving her, the subject of the Schenectady Carmel came up again, and she said quietly to me, in the hearing of another good lady her guest: "Bishop, I should like to build the chapel."

I leave it to you to imagine my delight, — I shall not call it surprise, — nothing she does in that line surprises me any more. Of course I accepted her offer and asked the other lady to bear witness that I had not asked it: it had come spontaneously from Mrs. Farrell's generous, pious heart.

So dear Mother, you must thank St. Teresa better than I can for relieving us of a considerable burden. I told Mrs. Farrell that I intended to build a beautiful chapel that will harmonize with the present structure. She never does things in a niggardly way, above all when God's glory is in question, and I know she will leave the entire matter in our hands.

Besides I want you to write me a real Carmelite expression of gratitude, which I may give to Mrs. Farrell, with promises of your best prayers for her and her family and the diocese, which she loves and has so generously favored. She will be pleased at that. Tell her also that at my request you will not reveal the name of your benefactress.

As soon as our architect has prepared his plans I shall inform you and send you a copy of them.

May God love you all. Commend me to my dear St. Teresa.

Devotedly yours in Xto.,
(signed) Edmund F. Gibbons,
Bp. of Albany.

I enclose your
Decree.

Kind regards to Fr. Crimmen. You may show him this letter.

The reader will remember what I said in the beginning of the Schenectady foundation, how in the month of June, 1922, I received a letter from the Rev. Mother Prioress of the St. Louis Carmel, asking *once more* for a few of our sisters to go with Rev. Mother Gabriel the former Prioress of that Carmel to a new foundation. She failed to mention the place of the foundation, and as I have said, the number of our sisters was completed and there were many vocations who could not

enter on account of the limited number permitted by our Rule. It was not difficult for us to give up a certain number of our sisters to go with Rev. Mother Gabriel to the said foundation, although all of them were very young as the foundation of Buffalo was only three years old.

I have also said that the Rev. Mother Prioress of St. Louis Carmel stated that it was necessary for Rev. Mother Gabriel (who was going to make the foundation) to come to Buffalo Carmel in order to prepare for the said foundation, and at the same time learn the Spanish customs as these were entirely different from theirs. We stated also that Rev. Mother Gabriel arrived on August 16, 1922, at our Monastery with the necessary permission of the Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis, Mo., and I was sure that they had considered the foundation, and the place, and all they wanted from us was the help of our sisters. I have mentioned my disappointment at the first interview with Rev. Mother Gabriel, as I questioned her where the foundation was going to be. "Oh I thought you had a foundation ready for me!" she said, "As our Mother Rose told me you wanted me here for help." Then I showed her the letters of Mother Rose applying to us for sisters. "No, Mother Gabriel," I said, "We never had planned to make any foundations yet because our sisters are too young, but we are willing to give you some sisters to help your Reverence, under the conditions that your Reverence will take up our Spanish customs to which all of our sisters have been trained." Rev. Mother Gabriel gladly acceded to this proposal as her Reverence was very anxious to have a foundation of her own. Her Reverence promised to study hard and learn our Constitutions and Ceremonial in order to be ready by the time of the foundation. It was then that our Rev. Father Chaplain, in his great love for Carmel and the extension of the Order, suggested that he would get a foundation for Mother Gabriel. As I have mentioned above, Rev. Mother Gabriel arrived on August 16th and our Rev. Father Chaplain went on August 31st, to Albany to see his Lordship, Rt. Rev. Edmund F. Gibbons.

Rev. Mother Gabriel started with great fervor to read our Constitutions, Ceremonial, Holy Customs, etc., and found that they were quite different from the ones which are kept in the United States Carmels. In order to explain this point we have to go back to the Chronicles of the Order.

As I suppose that these my writings are only for your Charities, my daughters of the Schenectady Carmel, I shall explain the difference between the Spanish and the American Carmels.

The Spanish Carmels were founded directly by our Holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus, after the reformation of the Order, and the Rule, Constitutions, Ceremonials, etc., have never been altered by any translations. The nuns from Mexico and Cuba are Spanish-speaking, and the very Constitutions and Ceremonial, etc. which they use are not printed here in this country, but are always brought directly from Spain, thus leaving no opportunity for changes.

In the very Chronicles which we are writing, the reader has seen how the Carmelite Community of Mexico (Spanish-speaking) was forced by the Revolution to fly from danger and found safety in the United States in the diocese of Grand Rapids, Michigan, under the Rt. Rev. Bishop Richter. This was the origin of the Spanish Carmels in America. This, therefore, was the occasion, when for the first time the Rule, Constitutions, Ceremonial, etc., were translated from the Spanish into English by myself. When these translations are finished they will be sent to our Father General in Rome for the Definitor General of the Order to revise the translations to see that no alterations have been made.

The origin of the American Carmels is as follows: after the death of our Holy Mother St. Teresa, Mother Anna of Jesus and Anna of St. Bartholomew (the latter being a lay-sister and the constant companion of our Holy Mother St. Teresa in her many foundations) went with four other sisters to make a foundation in France. It was then that the lay-sister, Anna of St. Bartholomew, was obliged by her Superiors to receive the black veil and become a choir nun, and a short time afterwards was sent to Pontoise, (France) a few leagues distant from the first French foundation, to make the second foundation. Together with Anna of St. Bartholomew went Mother Anna of Jesus, but when they arrived they found that things were not as they would have wished them. I will here give an extract from a book which throws much light on our present subject.

“Some years before the departure of Anna of St. Bartholomew for France, Msgr. Bretigny made a journey to Spain. He begged most earnestly of the superiors of the Order permission to take some Spanish Carmelites to France; but he could not

then succeed in his design. Not having been able to get the Carmelites, he took home the Constitutions of our Holy Mother Saint Teresa and had them translated into French. In several cities of France they gathered together some very virtuous, high-born ladies to initiate them little by little into the spirit of the new Order. These re-unions once well established they asked permission of the king to found a monastery in Paris, desiring for this purpose to have Spanish Carmelites brought there, but in case the Carmelites were not willing their plan was to have the Constitutions (which had been brought from Spain and translated into French) taught to these young ladies whom they had gathered together, with the intention of giving them the habit and making them daughters of our Holy Mother St. Teresa.

The first foundation having been thus arranged, Msgr. Bretigny returned to Spain bringing with him three noble French ladies. They intended, if their enterprise was successful, to take Spanish religious with them to France. Besides, during their stay in Spain they were to learn the language of the Country. They were several months in Spain without succeeding in obtaining religious from the Order. Seeing this Msgr. de Berulle and Msgr. Bretigny and the others did their utmost, and labored for a whole year before obtaining from the Superiors of the Order what they asked."

I wish to note here that at the time the Constitutions were taken from Spain to France and translated, as those who did the translating were not of our Order, there were many things which could not be well understood, and thus many changes were made. It will be seen also that as was said in the extract just given above, the young ladies of France who had been gathered together were being taught the Constitutions of our Order by those who did not know them well themselves, and thus alterations and changes could very easily creep in.

It was in October 1604 when the first foundation was made in France, in the city of Paris, to which, (as we stated above) Mother Anna of Jesus, Anna of St. Bartholomew (then a lay-sister), and four other sisters went. It was in that foundation that Anna of St. Bartholomew was obliged to become a choir nun, and shortly afterwards went together with Mother Anna of Jesus to Pontoise to make a second foundation in France.

To return to my subject, after Mother Anna of Jesus and Mother Anna of St. Bartholomew arrived in Pontoise they found

that things were not as they would have wished. A Convent had been built for the new Carmel but instead of having the limited number of twenty-one cells (as in the Reform of our Holy Mother St. Teresa there is never allowed more than twenty-one nuns), there were forty-five cells, and the superiors insisted upon them receiving as many applicants. In addition to this there were many other changes in the Constitutions which was the cause of much suffering to Mother Anna of Jesus and Mother Anna of St. Bartholomew as they wished to keep strictly to the Rule as was taught them by our Holy Mother St. Teresa herself. On this account Mother Anna of Jesus (who was of a very strong character), would not submit to such changes and returned to Spain while Mother Anna of St. Bartholomew, who was of a much more timid character) did not dare to speak nor resist, and she was obliged to accept whatever Msgr. Berulle had changed.

When Mother Anna of Jesus returned to Spain she complained to her Superiors of these changes that had been made in the Constitutions and the Superiors of the Order wished to get the Spanish nuns back again from France. The sufferings that Mother Anna of St. Bartholomew underwent on this account were innumerable, and one of them was that she was forbidden to communicate in any way with the Carmelite Nuns in Spain, being watched constantly.

From France foundations were made in England and once again it was necessary to translate the Constitutions, Ceremonial, etc., into English. Here again some alterations were made, although these Carmels permitted only the reception of twenty-one nuns as it prescribed by our Constitutions.

From England a foundation was made in the City of Baltimore, Md., this being the first Carmel in the United States. From this city a second American foundation was made in St. Louis, Mo. (and if the reader will recall this is the very Carmel from where Rev. Mother Gabriel came, — thus as has been seen their Constitutions and holy Customs were quite different from ours).

I have mentioned that Rev. Mother Gabriel had promised to study our Constitutions and adopt our holy Customs, but when her Reverence found that there were so many things different, (after so many translations), and that in addition to learning our Spanish Customs she would be obliged to study the Gregorian

Chant (which we had taken up in obedience to the wish of the Holy Father, but which the Carmels of America had not yet accepted), and as her Reverence was at the age of sixty-two years, she said she preferred to go back to her own community where she hoped at some future date to make another foundation without the necessity of changing her customs.

I communicated to our Rt. Rev. Bishop Turner of Buffalo the decision of Rev. Mother Gabriel, and his Lordship decided for her to go back to her convent in St. Louis, and for us to take up the foundation at Schenectady ourselves, as the Rt. Rev. Bishop Edmund Gibbons had already bought the property and we had already accepted in our previous letter of September 8th.

Rev. Mother Gabriel went back to her community of St. Louis on October 30th, and left us with the burden of a new foundation on our hands, having all young sisters, and two of our eldest sisters sick in bed, — Sister Mary of the Incarnation and Sister Solitude of the Blessed Sacrament, both with consumption.

I had previously arranged that those who should go to the new foundation with Mother Gabriel were those two very sisters who were sick because at the time Mother Gabriel first came they were not so sick and I thought that perhaps the change of climate would do them good. Also Mother Mary of St. John of the Cross, who was then the Sub-Prioress of the Community, and I was making the sacrifice of giving her up because, as she was a religious of 47 years of age and Sister Margaret of the Sacred Heart, who was already over ten years in the religious life. Also Sister Carmel of the Blessed Sacrament and Sister Teresa of Jesus, all of whom had made final vows, and were the eldest of the community. However, at the return of Mother Gabriel to her community our Chaplain changed his mind, as he was so much interested in the new foundation, more so than Mother Gabriel, and he did not approve of the arrangements: so he changed them all and appointed the youngest sisters, and those who were the most useless for the new foundation. For instance those whom our Father Chaplain appointed to come to the foundation of Schenectady were: Sr. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Sr. Lucy of the Blessed Trinity, Sr. Elizabeth, Sr. Gabriel of the Seven Sorrows. Although they were Choir nuns they had not the aptitude for the choir, and Sister Ignatius and Sister Rose, young sisters who were only eight days professed. Meantime our Rev. Father

Chaplain decided to help the community of Grand Rapids by sending there Sister Carmel of the Blessed Sacrament and Sister Teresa of Jesus, and Sister Dolores and Sister Helen, the two former being the two very sisters in whom I had placed all my hope of helping Mother Gabriel in the new foundation.

All this caused me very much suffering because they were not the proper religious to start a foundation, as our Holy Mother St. Teresa always used to give the best religious she had for the new foundations. There was nothing in the world I could do in order to change our Chaplain's mind, so my only recourse was to pray myself, and ask the Sisters to pray for the necessary light for Father to change his mind. The worries I had on this account were so numerous and the sufferings I had in the Buffalo foundation were so many that I only hope God in His goodness has numbered them. Many times our Father Chaplain who had taken the foundation as his own, and who considered himself as the spiritual director of the house, changed several times the religious who were supposed to come, and I was never satisfied because they were not the competent ones, although very good in their spirit. Finally our Chaplain said to me: "If you are not satisfied well go yourself". This seemed to me to be a useless suggestion because I was then in office, wanting only a few months to complete the three years, and besides I had these two sisters sick in bed whom I could not forsake in their last days, as they were two of those who had come from Mexico in the revolution, and who had developed consumption — Sister Incarnation and Sister Solitude of the Blessed Sacrament, whose sickness was so advanced that the doctor gave only a few weeks of life. For this our Father Chaplain said to me "it would be easy to bring them to the new foundation, even though it was necessary to bring them in a litter."

As Father insisted that for the perfection of the new house it would be much better for me to come, I begged our Lord to give me a sign of His Divine Will by taking those two sisters to Himself, and both of the sisters died shortly afterwards. I then succeeded in persuading Father to change the personnel and having instead of those mentioned above, the ones who actually came to the foundation.

The foundation at Schenectady was so far advanced that in the following letter of June 17th, 1923, His Lordship stated

that he had already received the permission of the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation to erect the Carmel in Schenectady. The letter is as follows:

June 17, 1923.

Dear Mother Elias,

You will be pleased to hear that I have received the permission of the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious Affairs, to erect the Carmel in Schenectady. I enclose a copy of the rescript.

The work in the house is almost finished. They have been very slow, the front wall of enclosure has scarcely been started, but I have hopes the contractor will hasten matters now. The material is on the ground, and the trench is dug. The division of the large rooms worked out well. There are in all on the second floor fifteen rooms (cells). I might say sixteen, for there is a space for another if it is needed in the passage way leading to the two rooms over the kitchen. We did not divide one large room.

Some of the plumbing in the laundry and kitchen was defective. We remedied it. The floor of the laundry was wood and worn out. We tore it out and put down a concrete floor. Some painting remains to be done, — in places where the Sisters could hardly reach, also the roof which is of metal needs a coat.

I have changed my mind about the plan of the passageway between the house and the Chapel, forming the Choir and Sacristies. You remember the plan called for a two-story building with rooms on the second floor. This would run the cost of the Chapel up so high that I had to change it, and come back to the original idea of a one-story building consisting of the Choir and Sacristies. Architecturally this plan is better than that of a two-story building. It will be a real cloister; the other would be neither one thing nor the other. We had to make some changes also in the Chapel to keep the cost down to Mrs. Farrell's figure of \$50,000, but nothing essential has been omitted. It will still be a beautiful chapel. I am waiting for the contractor's bids on this work. It is very hard to hasten them. I am glad we shall not have to wait for the Chapel before giving you the word to come. I doubt whether it will be finished before next Easter.

I am in a quandary about the fence on the sides and rear.

I dislike to deprive the sisters of any of their wonderful garden. In fact the extreme rear of it is the most attractive part, a beautiful grove. But it will cost considerable to fence it all in. The architect and I will look it over this week, and come to some conclusion. — Leave it all to me, dear Mother, I wish to do all that is possible now and not have the enclosure invaded later by working men any more than is necessary. As for the expense, — at most you are going to come out of it with little debt when one considers the building and grounds. That house could not be erected today for less than 60,000 dollars. And as I told you in the beginning I shall always be ready to assist if necessary.

I am most anxious to open the Carmel. If I find that it is going to take some time to build the fence all around, I may have a temporary enclosure back of the brick wall, just a small yard which will do for the little Community until the permanent fence is finished. We can then use the material in that for an arbor.

I forgot to say that in case the community grows to more than we have accommodations for on the second floor, we shall make more rooms in the attic, as we originally intended. It would be a very simple matter.

If Father Chaplain could run down soon his counsel on several matters would be very helpful; — especially on the location of the fence and the matter of necessary furnishings. I shall be on retreat from Monday, June 25th to Sat., June 30. The week of July 1st I shall be free, and from then on; at least I shall be in the diocese, and if I knew when to expect him I would surely be home.

Four weeks from tomorrow is the Feast of our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Pray that we may be ready to open on that day. It is possible, but there have been so many delays that I can not promise it.

I know, dear Mother, that I need not ask your prayers. I realize that I have them.

With a blessing on you all and the hope of soon welcoming the nucleus of *our* St. Teresa's, I remain,

Your devoted Father in Xto.

(signed) Edmund F. Gibbons.

Shortly after receiving the foregoing letter our Rev. Father Chaplain went to Albany to see His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Edmund F. Gibbons, as he had requested, and from there he wrote me the following letter:

Dear Mother:

Pardon the pencil as we have neither pen nor ink with which to write. We arrived at the Bishop's house last evening after two days on the road in the intense heat. Bishop Gibbons gave us a hearty reception. Today we have been together almost the entire day — having gone to Schenectady this morning and also this afternoon, arriving home late for supper. This morning the rain storm made our work rather difficult around the grounds of our new Carmel. However, the rain did not deter the Bishop who walked in wet grass without fear for wet feet. Everything has been done most satisfactorily. The second floor has been turned into very very fine cells. The change in the house since my last visit gave me a delightful surprise. With all his great work the Bishop has found time to do all things right for his Carmelite daughters. He never tires talking of them to the priests, religious, and people. He holds them up to all as his ideal religious. He talked Carmelites today to me for hours. He gave it to me in confidence that he hopes yet to give you the magnificent house of the Dominicans at Albany. They have disappointed him but he builds every hope upon the Schenectady Carmel.

He wants you to order *immediately* a turn and send it to Schenectady. This he cannot have done as no carpenter can be made to understand how to make a turn.

Mrs. Farrell is greatly interested in the Carmel. She has gone to the house to inspect it. She says your prayers have already obtained great favors for her. This gives the Bishop great satisfaction. The very thing he desired.

When all work is completed the debt will be about thirty thousand dollars, which the Bishop thinks can be managed without any difficulty.

I told the Bishop it would be impossible for the nuns to get here for July 16th. This caused some disappointment. Seeing this I said "Why not be satisfied for the feast of St. Ann — July 26th?" However, before leaving I am going to suggest August 15th. This will give you more time. I will write you what he thinks about the last date.

He asked who was coming. When informed that you decided heading the best of our community he near jumped with joy. He cried: "Wonderful sacrifice!" "One I certainly appreciate." This gave him greater hopes of having our nuns in Albany at no far distant date.

Though our community is mighty good, his anticipation of good things from his Carmel makes me realize the task before our sisters. He remarked that indeed he will be a father to his Carmelites.

He talked all kinds of plans to provide a good chaplain but above all an excellent confessor and director. He thinks a certain man at Albany is one of the best, but too busy to put more work upon him. He plans taking other communities from him that he can assign him to you sisters. Not the smallest thing is this holy man neglecting.

The pencil point is gone, therefore must say au revoir and God Bless you and all.

Tell Theresa I am fine and will write when I get the chance.

As ever,

Your father in Christ,

(signed) Geo. A. Crimmen

I then wrote the following letter to our Rt. Rev. Bishop:

July 10, 1923.

My Dear Reverend Bishop:

We were very happy at the return of our Father Chaplain to hear of all the preparations that your Lordship was making in order to receive your Carmelites.

My dear Bishop, it seems as though our dear Lord has given me the sign I wanted. I had two sisters sick in bed with Consumption, and for this reason when the foundation of Schenectady was being arranged I felt that I could not go and leave these two sisters on their death-beds. Now, however, our dear Lord has taken them both to their eternal rest, and there is nothing to prevent me from going to start the new foundation in your Diocese, provided our Bishop here gives me his permission to go. I feel that my work is done in this house. The observance is planted, and the good spirit of our holy Mother St. Teresa reigns in this house, so they have nothing more to do than to follow the path that has been started for them. If our Bishop gives me his consent to go I will do so with great pleasure, and

promise to do my best to plant the spirit of our Holy Mother St. Teresa in that Community so as to bring forth the fruits of prayer for the benefit of your Lordship and the priests of the Diocese. As our Holy Mother St. Teresa says in her life "The priest carries Doctrine while the Carmelite multiplies sacrifices. The Missionary casts seed and she must water it with prayer. The Missionary is an Apostle by his words and the Carmelite is a Martyr by her immolations, and both save souls."

In looking over our Epacta, which I am sending to your Lordship, I find that August 27th is the feast of the Transverberation of the Heart of our Holy Mother St. Teresa, and I thought it would be good to have a Novena in preparation for this great feast, beginning August 19th. As our Rev. Father Chaplain is so full of zeal he is most willing to preach for the entire nine days, in order to give the people an opportunity to learn more of the life of our Holy Mother.

EPILOGUE OF MOTHER MARY ELIAS

As we have finished reading the life and spirit of Mother Mary Elias of the Blessed Sacrament, a discalced Carmelite who died not too long ago, we have been confronted constantly with the difference between what is divine and what is human in the life of man. We have seen too, that the source of holiness is Christ in His real fullness in every one of us. The Indwelling Christ and the Indwelling Spirit, though not the same, they are the principles from which our sanctification is derived. The great lesson we derive from this beautiful soul's life in Carmel is how all her faith rested upon God, and how her faith knew no frontier. The peace she lived in and by, was the Peace of Christ, not a quietness of our psychological conscience. Sanctity is our possession, not because of what we do, but because of what we are: "the workmanship of God". The peace of God is the proper soil for a soul to rest upon God. And this is what we are here for. True holiness can have no other foundation. For He, Who would lead us into holiness, must "guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79). From this peace came Reverend Mother Mary Elias' zeal — "zealous for good works" (Titus 2:14). She possessed in her humble Carmelite habit the clothing of immortality (Rom. 2:7).

What made Mother an extraordinary Foundress was not a secret. She was only carrying out the great work of making holy Foundations. For this reason her life was a life of peace, producing peace and building Carmels in this same spirit of peace. It is in connection with the exhortation "be perfect", that Saint Paul sets down the gracious assurance: "The God of love and peace be in all of you" (2 Cor. 13:11).

Mother Mary Elias was moved by God, from the depth of her heart, to become a Carmelite. It was in the early years of her novitiate when she became intensely aware of God's love for her, a free love, but a God's love, making her fit into His plan of redemption and sanctification. Her love was manifested in the attitude she assumed in following each and every one of the details of the Rule and Constitutions and of the *Way of Perfection* and the *Interior Castle*, written by Saint Teresa of

Jesus. She did not profess holiness by wearing a habit. She possessed holiness which gave all her actions the unction of a holiness and consistency of life. Her entire life was spent at the foot of the Cross, but "tasting that the Lord is gracious" (1 Peter 2:3) and living as one who has been raised from the dead and made partaker of Christ (Heb. 3:14); "partaker of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4): "who has been delivered from this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4).

The cross was never too heavy for Reverend Mother Mary Elias, for it was never carried by herself alone. She suffered; her heart was at times torn into pieces, but the fragments of her heart were "united" by His strength (Ps. 86:11), producing in her life a state of being crucified rather than a disposition for accepting any cross God would send her. She found all the cures for her love and for her suffering in her love for Christ Jesus. "Thou has no healing medicines" (Jer. 30:13), for the word of the great Healer is, "I will bring . . . health and cure". And our dear Mother found her complete healing at the cross, for the cross heals. It is not merely that we "glory" in the cross (Gal. 6:14) but we draw strength from it. The cross was for Mother Mary Elias the meeting place where she received new strength, the strength to destroy the fears that came to her often. She knew she was fighting against all the devil's warfare, with principalities and powers. And from the cross she received the power to stand (Eph. 6:12-13), to fight — and to remain in this living faith until the end (2 Tim. 4:7).

Standing by the cross was her daily attitude and her daily prayer. If she became the Carmelite whom we venerate today, it is due to her spirit of love for the cross. For it is when we see her standing near the cross that we discover her sense of self-denial, (Rom. 15:3), for the soul who stands by the cross has crucified herself with Him forever.

"I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live now, not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself to me" (Gal. 2:20). Mother Mary Elias belonged to Christ, but her humility would never allow her to say, "But Christ lives in me". With her life, more than with her words, she rested in Christ, holding fast to her communication with the Son of God, and from this communication came forth her morti-

fication as a discalced Carmelite, for her flesh was crucified with all its affections and lusts (Gal. 5:24).

Those who knew her in life and are still living have told me of her life of joy in the midst of her sufferings, for the cross not only purifies us but brings us the greatest joys. From the cross, Mother Mary Elias, as from a double fountain received all the springs of peace and all the streams of holiness. There we see Mother, nailed to a cross and quietly living her life of Carmel — a life built upon the words of the Lord: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matt. 16:24).

END OF EPILOGUE OF MOTHER MARY ELIAS



Pope Paul VI blessing Dr. Morales' work for cloisters all over the world.

OTHER BOOKS BY AUTHOR:

The Canticle of Solitude	\$ 1.50
The Amorous Whispering80
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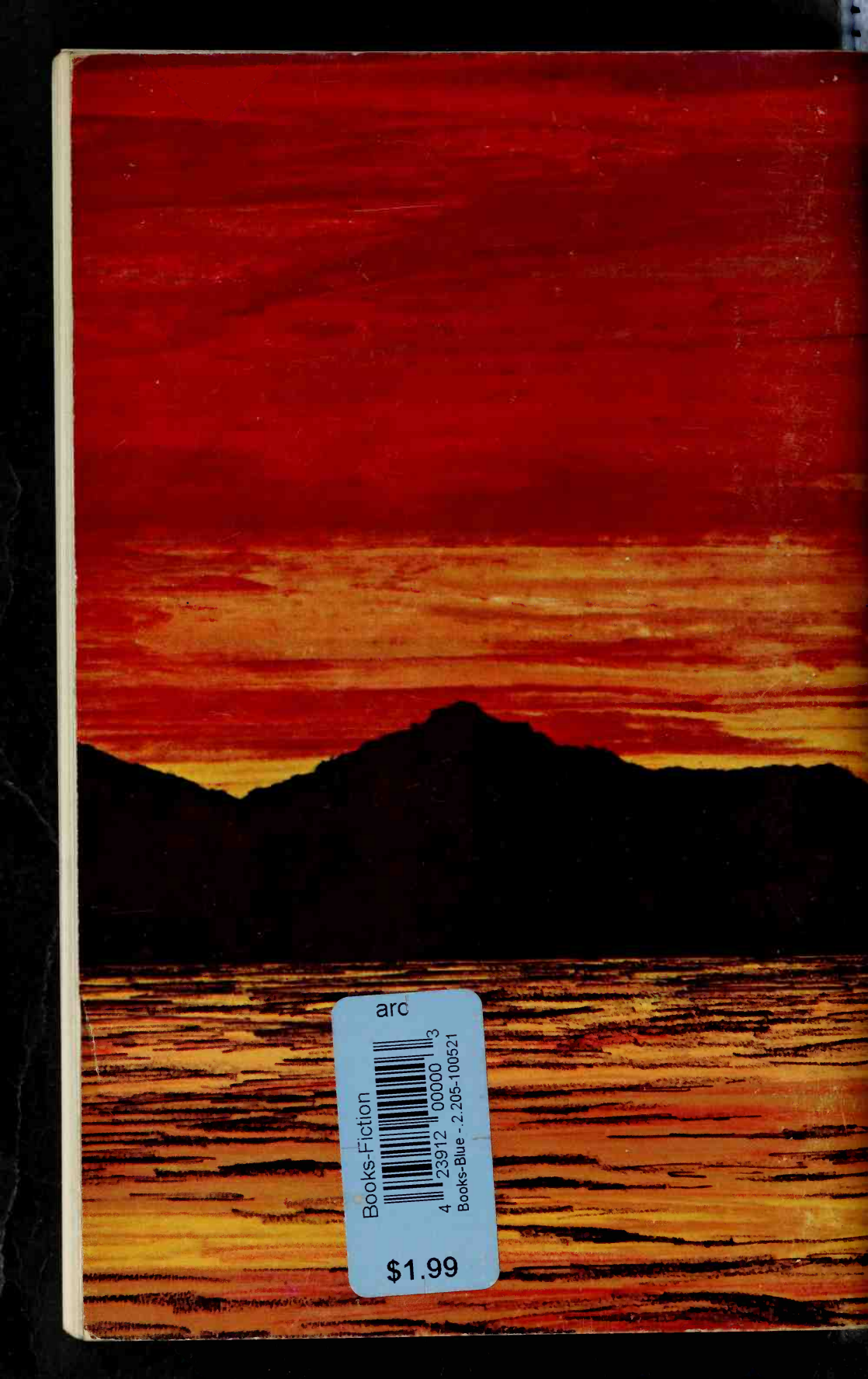
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